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ABSTRACT

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communicative approaches to teacher training

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INTRODUCTION

A significant problem in the design of teacher-training courses in the past has appeared to be a matter of identifying an appropriate mix of theory and practice in a range of prescriptive packages which would turn out a perfectly moulded teacher. If one accepts, however, that teaching is not only a dynamic but an organic process, then logically the fully-trained teacher cannot exist. The conventional approach begins to look less satisfactory and some re-definition of training objectives becomes necessary. Should we not be looking for non-prescriptive ways of linking theory and practice which will ensure that the individual teacher continues to develop professionally beyond the formal training he may receive at various stages of his career?

What we need is an approach which takes account of the teacher's own knowledge, skills and attitudes – one which will then guide the teacher towards responsibility for his own professional development – encouraging in him the same kind of independence and commitment to future growth which the communicative approach to language teaching aims to give the language learner in offering not just skills but strategies for further learning. Here perhaps is a better-fitting key to success than the modular, pre-packed solutions: a washback effect from communicative teaching to training methods. The focus in teacher training is now much more on the teacher; trainers are adopting a trainee-centred approach which shuns idealisation of the teaching process, preferring to face all the constraints of the local classroom situation head on. 'Training' – the word itself seems less appropriate for a process which aims at a changing of attitudes and an opening of minds rather than a shaping of behaviour. The movement in micro-teaching from the classical Stanford model to the cognitive, sensitising process described in Mike Wallace's article, and exemplified in Falla Sow's and Donard Britten's experience, is an illustration of this.

David Kirwan and Allen Swales's frank account of their unsuccessful attempt to change teachers' attitudes points out the dangers of a prescriptive approach to training. Their experience underlines the need in designing training courses to consider the teachers as they are, in the context of their society's traditional attitudes and values, rather than as the trainer would like them to be. A possible solution to the problem they encountered is offered in Patrick Early and Rod Bolitho's article which shows how working from the basis of constraints on the teaching situation can be a positive, and not negative, factor in encouraging a change of attitude.

It is clear from this collection of articles that the washback effect from communicative teaching to training methods is occurring, in many different

ways. Our contributors describe a range of situations in which the emphasis on communication in the language classroom is increasingly reflected in training methods. Although commissioned and written independently, the articles offer a striking consensus of views, based firmly on experience, that the most effective training for communicative language teaching lies in practising what one preaches. Not a new idea to any trainer, but one which has traditionally been seen as relevant to certain components of a course – the sample lesson of an exotic language taught by direct method, or the remedial language work for non-native speaker teachers – and not as overall training strategy.

Perhaps the best introduction to a volume of this kind is to let the writers speak for themselves:

'The major role of the teacher-trainer should be to create an environment in which trainees will question existing practices themselves and can evaluate the various solutions which they or their trainer subsequently offer.'

Jane Willis

'Our main aim has been to encourage active contributions from all group members, to avoid spoon-feeding the "correct" language teaching methodology and above all to keep the realities of their own teaching situation in mind.'

Jonathan Seath

'. . . teachers cannot simply watch a "virtuoso" performance and attempt to copy it in a succession of more or less similarly organised lessons. The additional step of involving teachers themselves in the planning, and teaching of a lesson might have led to more success.'

David Kirkman and Allen Swales

'The teacher-trainer must address himself to the question which is uppermost in trainees' minds: namely, will it work? Will the new ideas presented, the novel materials and procedures demonstrated enrich the teaching-learning process or? Or do the awful realities of the local teaching situation rule them out from the start? To meet this challenge the teacher-trainer must find a way of getting to grips with the problems and constraints which oppress all teachers everywhere . . . the painful reality experienced by teachers is in danger of acting as a block or check to their professional development. They cannot listen to the expert, let alone engage in a valid dialogue as long as they are oppressed by the knowledge that "real life is not like that". The answer lies in getting the expert to listen to the teachers, and in getting the teachers to listen to one another.'

Patrick Early and Rod Bolitho

'. . .feedback from peers is often more effective in changing trainees' teaching behaviour than is trainer feedback, and as much learning takes place in exchanges between peers as in trainer-trainee exchanges. Teaching behaviour . . . identified by the group as a whole is likely to prove a more motivating objective than what is merely put forward by the trainer.'

Falla Sow and Donard Britten

'Trainees want to analyse what happens in their classes in relation to what "should" happen. Their own personal reactions, and those of their students, are more important than an impersonal professional assessment. Their responses and evaluation are more crucial than the trainer's in determining whether they will ultimately implement the ideas. They need informal reaction sessions where they can exchange impressions with each other, as well as formal input from the trainer.'

Tony O'Brien

'When all is said and done, the crucial point is the interaction of personalities, and the tutor has a crucial role to play in this: a relaxed, friendly and unthreatening atmosphere is essential . . . the capacity for intelligent self-criticism and sensitivity to the classroom process is essential for the future development of the teacher.'

Mike Wallace

These quotations best illustrate the common theme emerging from this collection. An indication of the full potential of adopting a communicative approach to training in a variety of ELT situations is to be found in the articles which follow.

Gillian Marsh

THE USE OF VIDEO IN EFL TEACHER TRAINING[1]

Michael J Wallace, Moray House College of Education

At a time when all the costs of educational materials – including the essential textbook – are soaring, the cost of video-recording equipment is coming down, to the point where in some countries the video-recorder is becoming the next household 'toy', joining the television set and the tape-recorder. This being the case, it is not surprising that many teacher-training institutions, even those with modest budgets, have acquired, or are contemplating the acquisition of, video-recording equipment.

The diffusion of this technological facility coincides in many teacher-training programmes with an increasing interest in the actual process of teaching in its classroom setting. It has become common to divide the teaching process into three phases: **pre-active, interactive** and **evaluative.**[2] The pre-active phase is the planning phase, as when the teacher is preparing the lesson plan, choosing materials and so on; the interactive phase is concerned with the actual classroom data where the teacher is managing the class, reacting to student responses, dealing with specific errors, or whatever. The evaluative phase is concerned with the evaluation of what has been learned, ie some form of testing. The distinctions between these phases are not cut-and-dried; obviously some informal testing usually goes on in the interactive stage; and there is a dynamic relationship between the pre-active and interactive stages – for example, the teacher may modify his/her next lesson on the basis of the interactive experience of the lesson currently being taught.

In general terms, however, we could say that the pre-active stage is more rational, cognitive and **strategic**; whereas the interactive stage is more contingent, intuitive and **tactical**. Traditionally in teacher training, where the classroom process has been examined in detail at all, it has been more in terms of the pre-active stage: syllabus-design, the selection of teaching items, choice of teaching aids and so on. The interactive stage has usually been dealt with in terms either of **teaching practice** (on a one-to-one basis between the trainee and his tutor) or of **teaching observation** (between the trainee and the teacher he is observing). The main drawback about these techniques is the

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[1]Part of this article relates to research funded by the Overseas Development Administration, Scheme No. R3435.

[2]For the use of these terms, see Jackson (1979) and Stones (1979, p. 198).

lack of objective data: each member of the instructional dyad (trainee/tutor or trainee/model teacher) is talking about data which has been filtered through his own subjective impressions (to some degree inevitably)[3] but which is also non-retrievable – the teaching moment has gone for ever.

One of the main advantages of videotaping (and also audiotaping) is, therefore, that it provides some kind of objective record of what actually took place. Of course, electronic observation is not the versatile and individually-tuned medium that human observation is, but it does provide a record, nevertheless. This has meant that the interactive phase of ELT is available for study and analysis in a way that was not possible before. Tutor and trainee can look at the evidence together with a much greater likelihood of a common interpretation of the data. Very often, no criticism from the tutor is necessary: the trainee will venture his own self-criticism on the basis of what he has seen.

Repetition of the interaction data is possible not just once but virtually *ad lib*, which greatly increases the scope for trainee autonomy. If he/she has independent access to a video cassette recorder (VCR) or videotape recorder (VTR) the trainee can watch and analyse a sample of teaching as many times as is necessary.

Also important is the use of video material to establish a common experience between a group of trainees and their tutors. On some in-service courses, for example, the teachers have very varied backgrounds. The showing of some sample lessons on tape establishes a common point of reference, even if it is only to conclude that the experience of some of all of the participants varies widely from that shown on the tape! Even then, the tape can still be a useful point of reference: given this teaching situation, it can give rise to such questions as: What do you think the teacher's aim was? What did the teacher actually do? How did the class react? Is there anything else he/she could have done? etc.

It is to be hoped, however, that enough taped material will eventually be available for the majority of teachers to relate to. When this happens, they will clearly form a more secure data-base for discussion than reminiscences of alleged classroom triumphs or (less frequently) disasters.

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[3]Some methodologists have tried to overcome the subjectivity of the process by using interaction analysis data (see, for example, Moskowitz, 1971) or the evidence of multiple observers (see Lawless, 1971).

In the same general vein, the examination of classroom data can hopefully provide exemplification for a metalanguage to talk about the teaching process. The point has been made by Lortie (1966)[4] with reference to the teaching scene in the United States: 'My impression, after reading hundreds of pages of interview transcript, is that teachers possess very little in the way of shared items or concepts about the subtleties of teaching, as an interpersonal transaction. The language they use is the language of everyday speech. . .' With regard to EFL teachers, one might often remark that they are much better equipped with a technical language to discuss linguistics than to discuss the teaching process. However, this area has come under more detailed examination in recent years, as witness the work of Allwright (1977), Bowers (1980), Fanselow (1977), Moskowitz (already referred to) and, from a more linguistic perspective, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975).

A more obvious application is the use of taped material to demonstrate teaching techniques. A series like the ILEA videotape bank[5] follows in the tradition of the ELT videotapes (and films) pioneered by the British Council of which the *Pair and Group Work* tape is one recent example.[6] The potential value of such tapes and films is clear, more specially in pre-service training situations. In commercially retailed tapes such as those mentioned, the theoretical input is usually combined with the classroom data, and useful follow-up activities are suggested.

The declining cost of videotaping will make it possible for many teacher-training institutions to complement such material with classroom data, using local teachers and classes. There are many practical problems involved in such a programme, some of which will be discussed later in this article; but, if they can be overcome, the users may find that the lower technical standards may be offset by the increased relevance of teaching situation and flexibility in the range of teaching topics.

Another use that can be made of videotape, which is parallel to the one previously mentioned, and may indeed overlap with it, is the widening of the trainee's experience by introducing him or her to unusual or innovative teaching techniques. Normal teaching observation (whereby the trainee sits in on an experienced teacher) is often rather conservative than otherwise: the teacher will teach something that he/she can confidently handle rather than

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[4]p. 58, quoted in Allen and Ryan (1969), pp. 26-26.

[5]Details in References under title.

[6]Details of this and other British Council videotapes/films available from the Printing and Publishing Department of the British Council.

something experimental. Even the tutor may discuss certain techniques rather than demonstrate them often because he or she feels that the techniques in question are worth mentioning but does not feel sufficiently convinced of their worth or confident enough of his or her own expertise in them to demonstrate them. In such cases, a videotaped demonstration by an experienced and dedicated teacher using a given method or technique would be invaluable. There are drawbacks, of course, sometimes those who favour some of the more 'affective' approaches to language teaching say it is not enough to see such an approach in action, it must be experienced as by a participant. Nevertheless, the general point is valid and there is obviously a case for having on tape as wide an exemplification of teaching approaches as possible.

Another advantage which video has over direct teacher observation is the possibility of a commentary on the classroom interaction while it is actually unfolding before the viewer. The commentary can either take the form of subtitles, which can label the process to which the viewer's attention should be drawn (eg 'chain drill' or 'inference question' or whatever) or it can be in the form of a 'voice-over' where there is a spoken commentary on the classroom interaction. Since one of the problems of viewing classroom data is that the viewer can be distracted by irrelevant factors, this is a useful device.

Video-based training programmes are sometimes accused of encouraging teacher-centredness, of being obsessed with the teacher's performance instead of what the students are doing. If this is indeed a fault, then the responsibility does not lie with the medium, but with the training programmes – which consciously or unconsciously reflect the concerns of the trainees themselves. There is research evidence[7] which shows that when videotapes of the teacher and the class are shown side by side initial teacher-trainees pay more attention to the teacher, whereas more experienced teachers pay more attention to the response of the class. The trainee is more concerned with 'What do I do?', the experienced teacher with 'What effect does it have?' The producer of a training tape has therefore to be clear about what effect he is trying to produce on the trainee, with a consequent selection of images: there is no need to be teacher-centred unless that is what is required. Indeed, in classroom situations such as group-work it is possible for the tape to monitor what is happening in the group that the teacher is not attending to at a particular time.

The use of video makes 'distance teacher-training' a possibility, either by electronic relay or by simply posting cassettes of practice lessons to a central

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[7] Fauquet and Strasfogel (1976).

point for monitoring and comments. Indeed, the commercially-produced tapes and films referred to at the beginning of the present article are examples of distance training, or at least the basic material for such a programme. However, the experience of those working in the field of distance teaching, at least in third-world situations, shows first, that the problems of using the sophisticated technology of television are legion, and should be weighed carefully against the advantages of radio, and second, that no technology succeeds unless it is used 'in support of live teachers interacting with other people' (Young *et al*, 1980, p.132). Distance teacher-training programmes using television in more technologically advanced situations seem to be more successful.

So far we have been discussing tapes incorporating samples of teaching done by someone other than the trainee; an equally important and perhaps more common use of video-recording is to allow the trainee to see **himself** in a teaching role (somewhat alarmingly called 'self-confrontation' in the jargon of video training). This is usually organised within a microteaching framework.[8] Although most practitioners of microteaching insist that video is not an essential feature of the technique,[9] it does feature in many microteaching programmes. The reasons for this are obvious: video provides a convenient form of playback for the 'critique' stage of microteaching in which the trainee's performance in the teaching role is discussed; the microteaching format allows for very small 'classes' for short periods of time – thus making use of TV studio facilities both economic and convenient.

One of the main features of teacher-training using self-confrontation is that it is individualised training *par excellence*: the trainee's own performance is put under the lens, so to speak, and may be discussed not only in the light of the trainee's own self-observation, but also the observation of his tutor, and perhaps also his fellow-trainees, and even the class he has taught (in a roleplaying situation, of course, these last two will be the same). The prayer of Robert Burns, for the gift to see ourselves as others see us, answered at last!

Dire consequences of this 'confrontation' have been predicted (see Fuller and Manning, 1973). MacLeod (1975) argues that these fears are largely unfounded. He lists the alleged drawbacks as (1) high level of stress, (2) trainees focus on their appearance rather than on the 'skills' (the so-called

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[8]For a more extended discussion of microteaching and TEFL, see Cripwell and Geddes (1979), Wallace (1979).

[9]Allen and Ryan (1969).

'cosmetic effect'), and (3) the trainees are not realistic about their performance on the tape. He notes that the data on which some at least of these allegations are based do not come from the teaching situation, but from other fields, such as psychiatry, and brings forward contrary evidence on the first two allegations based on his own research at Stirling University.

The experience of the present writer, who has been involved with microteaching programmes for hundreds of EFL teachers (mostly not native-speakers) over many years, is that stress has been a negligible factor: there was only one case, in all that time, of a 'teacher' who took stage fright and was unable to 'perform'. In an anonymous questionnaire given to eighty-seven in-service and pre-service EFL teachers,[10] a large majority of the course-members found microteaching 'useful' (87%), 'relevant' (70%) and 'interesting' (77%). When asked if they were embarrassed at having to perform as a 'teacher' before the other course-members, only 6% said 'very much', 39% said 'a little', and 55% said 'not at all.' When asked to list their problems only 8% said that they were 'put off by the camera'; the major problems were 'not teaching in a normal classroom' (this was a role-playing situation) 67%, and 'not enough teaching time' 40%.

Obviously, however, this is something which has to be handled with tact. It is easier perhaps for overseas teachers to put themselves on display, as it were, in a British institution rather than among their colleagues in their own country (although some of the respondents to the questionnaire referred to above were on single-country courses). It helps, of course, if the 'pupils' are real pupils, and not other trainees role-playing; it is also easier if the critique is a matter only between the trainee and his tutor (see, for example, the Michigan programme described by Dugas, 1967). This latter solution, however, deprives the trainee of the opportunity to talk the lesson through with his fellow-trainees, and also deprives the trainees as a group of the opportunity of improving certain aspects of their own teaching by observation (Leith and Britton (1977) have research data to support this technique.)

Paulston (1974), describing the use of videotape at Pittsburgh University, points out that the trainee who has just done the teaching introduces his own videotaped lesson to the group. Once he has made his introduction, he loses all right to speak unless he is specifically asked to do so. 'The reason for this is that the discussion can easily turn into self-justification. If we remove the possibility for this, we hasten objective self-analysis' (*ibid* p 59). At the end,

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[10] Wallace (1979), Appendix IV. NB – multiple answers were allowed for the listing of problems.

the tutor summarises and asks the trainee if he wants to make any further comments.

Another way of lessening the pressure on the 'teacher' is to use group preparation. This technique was used by the present writer on a recent in-service course in Argentina. Since real classes were not available, role-playing had to be used. Micro-lessons were jointly prepared by small groups of course-participants; one member of, let us say, Group A was chosen by the group to rehearse the lesson to his/her own group prior to 'teaching' it to the members of Group B, and a member of Group B was chosen to perform similarly with Group A. Thus the responsibility for the lesson was diffused among the group, with the concomitant advantages of group preparation. (For another group approach, in which 'teachers' prepare their own lessons but have the advice and support of their groups, see Cripwell 1979). When all is said and done, the crucial point is the interaction of personalities, and the tutor has a crucial role to play in this: a relaxed, friendly and unthreatening atmosphere is essential.

In the opinion of the present writer, this means that videotaped teaching should be used purely for instructional purposes, and, if at all possible, not as a basis for assessment. In some training programmes, the trainee is graded on his comments on a tape of his own teaching[11]: this seems fair enough, since the capacity for intelligent self-criticism and sensitivity to the classroom process is essential for the future development of the teacher. In any case, 'talking through' a tape of his own teaching is a good discipline for a trainee.

On the 'cosmetic effect' already referred to, MacLeod's evidence shows that it is an important factor in the initial self-viewing but that it declines in importance thereafter. In the questionnaire already referred to, 87% of the course-members said that seeing themselves on videotape had made them aware of habits and mannerisms which they were now trying to change. On the other hand, when asked for their first reactions to seeing themselves on video-tape only 12% said that they were 'disappointed', while 41% said that they were 'pleased', and 46% were 'not affected one way or the other' (nil return = 1%). The latter data are rather difficult to interpret, since they refer to a total response; but they clearly do not imply massive destruction of self-confidence.

They may, however, have a bearing on the third alleged drawback of self-confrontation listed by MacLeod: namely, that the trainees are not

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[11] See, for example, Lawless (1971); for an approach in which assessment is built into the microteaching programme, see Cousin *et al* (1978).

realistic about their performance on tape. This was the one allegation which MacLeod found some support for in his work with Stirling University trainees. It is also supported by research referred to in Bierschenk (1974), where there is evidence for trainees to evaluate their taped performance on the predispositions which they bring to the viewing (eg their feeling that the lesson has gone well or badly) **unless there is some kind of framework to help them interpret the data.**

The importance of other feedback in addition to the mere act of self-confrontation is emphasised by several writers. Obvious sources of feedback are the tutor's comments and group discussion. In this connection, the term 'critique', often used for this stage, has unfortunate connotations. There is an immediate tendency for group-members, especially if they are experienced teachers, to rush to evaluate the performance, categorising the lesson as a whole or various bits of it as 'good' or 'bad'. This is not helpful and immediately puts the 'teacher' in a defensive frame of mind. It is far better to spend some time establishing (a) what the 'teacher's aims were, and (b) what actually happened. Some tutors use observation grids to help in this. Sometimes these grids are based on established Interaction Analysis systems (such as Flanders (1970) or Bellack (1966), or one of the FL-specific systems derived from them). Very often, however, they are *ad hoc* and relate to the teaching skill being focussed on. Such grids can be of a very straightforward nature, such as Figure 1, which relates to the different levels of question a teacher might ask on a comprehension passage. (Categories are from the Barrett taxonomy, Melnik and Merritt, 1972).

As you watch the lesson, put a tick (✓) for each question, according to what kind of question you judge it to be.

	TOTAL
LITERAL RECOGNITION	
LITERAL RECALL	
REORGANISATION	
INFERENCE	
EVALUATION	
APPRECIATION	
GRAND TOTAL	

Figure 1: Observation Grid for Question Types

There is research evidence that such devices can make the training process more effective. (On the importance of trainee activity during the training process see, for example, Turney *et al*, 1973, p 24). They undoubtedly help to focus the trainees' minds on the point at issue and make for more constructive and relevant discussion. The advantage of videotape is that disagreements over categorisation (as to whether, for example, a certain question was a literal question or not) can be settled, or at least more fully explored, by a replay of the tape.

In any case, whether observation schedules are used or not, the emphasis should be on **establishing the data**. What type of drill was the 'teacher' using? How did the students respond? What kind of language activity is going on at this part of the tape? What effect is such activity achieving? How does it relate to genuine communication (if that is one of the foci of the lesson)? And so on. Videotape lends itself very well to this kind of analysis.

When there is general agreement on the data, then alternatives can be explored – not necessarily, let it be noted, what could be done **better**, but simply what could have been done **differently**.[12] If the 'teacher' had done X instead of Y, what might the result have been? Lastly, the introspective evidence of the participants in the lesson can be used: the 'teacher' and the 'pupils' (whether they are real pupils or not). What were the **teacher's** aims? Did he think that he achieved them? Would he have done anything different? Did the **pupils** know what the teacher was trying to do? Were they confused or 'lost' at any point? Did the teacher do anything that distracted them from the teaching point? The answers to such questions may cause some parts of the tape to be viewed again in a different light.

If it is given and taken in the right spirit, this kind of feedback is invaluable for the trainee.

Fauquet and Strasfogel (1976: Foreword) are emphatic on this: 'the evaluation requirement cannot be reduced to the construction of analytical grids alone. If the practice of self-observation is to be rendered operational, the awareness both experienced and reflexive, which underlies individual self-observation must be backed up by critical group discussion in which analysis of content constitutes a genuine analysis of needs.' Most tutors who use a classroom-pedagogics approach to teacher-training (ie an approach which features classroom interaction) would probably agree with this emphasis. Teacher training is not basically a matter of 'shaping' or 'modelling or putting trainees through behavioural hoops: teaching is too

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[12] On the counter-productive effects of using evaluative terms in the training process where it is not necessary to do so, see Fanselow (1977), pp. 27, 28.

subtle, complex and personal an activity to be adequately handled in this way. Trainees, especially those with little or no experience, need clear guidelines, but they have to be convinced of the why as well as the how if they are to use techniques sensibly; as Politzer concluded from Stanford data in 1970, 'most teaching behaviours cannot be classified as intrinsically "good" or "bad" . . .'. It is not simply a matter of mimicking techniques: it is a question of the best way to explain them. Videotape is strong on how, but can also be related to why (as well as what if . . .?).

In spite of the desirability of discussion, there is also evidence that autonomous self-observation programmes can have positive results, especially with in-service trainees (i.e experienced teachers). The most famous of such programmes is probably the 'Minicourse' developed by Borg and his colleagues at Farwest Laboratory (Borg *et al*, 1970). These training packs include model tapes, observation schedules and microteaching briefing material. In the microteaching part the teacher has to have the relevant part of his lesson videotaped, which is then analysed by the teacher himself, using the guidelines provided in the Minicourse. These courses have been adapted and tested by Professor Perrott of Lancaster in both British and overseas situations, with significant gains using various behavioural indices (see, for example, Perrott, 1975).

Practical Aspects These can be dealt with under two headings: (1) Technical and (2) Personal.

1 **Technical**[13] The televising of classroom interaction is a large subject and all that can be done in the space available here is to raise a few basic points. The choice of equipment obviously depends on the amount of money available. In general, it can be said that as far as cameras are concerned, monochrome is fine for almost all training purposes: colour is more expensive, gives rise to more technical problems, and does not as yet have the flexibility of operation of monochrome: most monochrome cameras can operate using ordinary room lighting; colour cameras are more likely to require specialised artificial lighting. For many training situations perfectly satisfactory results can be obtained with one camera: this is especially true of microteaching situations. In a large class there is a better chance of catching all the interaction with two cameras, but this of course entails the use of a vision mixer (and someone to man it) in order to cut from one camera to the other. Sound quality is even more of a problem. The best solution is individual microphones, or at least one microphone between two students.

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[13] I am grateful to my colleague John Archer, Producer and Lecturer in Educational Television, Moray House College, for his assistance with this section.

This requires quick anticipation by the sound engineer, and this is easiest if the sound control equipment, and also the vision mixer, are located in the classroom. It should be noted, that if videotaping is impossible on the grounds of expense (or whatever) that very satisfactory data for many EFL skills can be acquired using an ordinary tape-recorder, especially in small group situations, or if the focus is on the teacher. Some investigators have even found that audio is more effective than video for certain skills (eg questioning) because essentially irrelevant visual data are filtered out.

2 **Personal** Teachers who have the courage to appear before cameras to be videotaped are entitled to certain assurances. They are entitled to know what the video-recording is to be used for, and whom it is going be made available to. In most microteaching programmes, there is no problem as tapes are wiped at the end of each session for reasons of economy. However, if teachers agree to make sample tapes which are to be preserved, it is good practice to assure them that they will be able to observe themselves, and that, if they are unhappy with their performance on any particular tape, it will be immediately wiped. They should also be given a list of the potential audiences for the tapes (or classes of audience – eg their fellow students, students in succeeding years, students in other institutions etc) and should indicate how widely they are willing that it should be shown. This document should be signed by the teacher himself and also by those undertaking to respect his wishes. (For further discussion of guidelines to videotape recording, see Smith, 1973.)

Conclusions Video has a very important part to play in the increasing, and welcome, emphasis on the interactive stage of the teaching process. Its principal advantage is that it is a means of objectifying the teaching process and converting what is subjective and ephemeral into something that is experienced in common and capable of analysis. For such analysis some kind of observational framework is required which will probably derive from an underlying approach which is cognitive and theoretical. The effectiveness of the analysis will depend on how it relates to the trainee's own ideas and attitudes. Premature evaluation of the data should be avoided: the trainee must be encouraged firstly to **observe**, and then perhaps to consider **alternatives**. These considerations apply whether the trainee is observing samples of the teaching of others or a sample of his/her own: and every trainee should, if at all possible, have the opportunity to do both.

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DESIGNING A MICRO-TEACHING PROGRAMME IN THE THIRD WORLD

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This article argues the point of view that microteaching for the third world should preferably be built around short intensive programmes for trainees working in groups, teaching real pupils in at least half their micro-lessons. Moreover, while we recognise that cut-price microteaching is entirely feasible (Lawless, 1971; British Council, 1979), we think there are very strong arguments in favour of the full use of video equipment in the third world as elsewhere, and the likelihood is of a steady weakening of the practical objections to this in most parts of the world. Unless otherwise specified, our remarks refer to full-time initial teacher-training, with microteaching taking place inside the training institution.

We take microteaching to imply by definition:

1 A skills approach. Limited and coherent bundles of desirable teacher behaviour are defined as far as possible in easily observable terms. One such bundle, or skill, is practised at a time.

2 Scaled-down practice situations. Trainees practise the skill in short micro-lessons (preferably five to ten minutes) taught to very small classes (about five pupils).

3 Maximum relevant feedback to help each trainee to evaluate his or her performance in the skill.

In addition, we consider the following to be highly desirable:

4 Perceptual modelling of the skill before trainees practise it, ie a live demonstration and/or film or video sequences.

5 Maximum positive reinforcement of trainee success and a supportive practice and feedback environment.

6 A non-directive or counselling approach by the trainer (which means that his/her reinforcements will usually be delayed).

A programme with these features and using video might, in parts of the third world, come up against one or more of the following difficulties:

1 Lack of resources for the purchase of video equipment.

2 Repair and maintenance problems.

3 Unreliable electricity supply.

4 Shortage of organisational skills (since relatively few people have had the necessary exposure to complex systems to acquire such skills).

5 An authoritarian or magisterial tradition in education and in teacher-training (whether of indigenous or colonial origin).

First, the design choice to be made between individual microteaching and microteaching in groups. By individual microteaching we mean a programme in which each trainee teaches his micro-lesson observed only by the trainer; no other trainees observe the micro-lesson or take part in the subsequent feedback on it. (The preliminary phases of the microteaching cycle for each skill – presentation, modelling, lesson preparation – may, however, be conducted in groups.) In group (or collective) microteaching, on the other hand, all phases are jointly conducted, with each trainee's micro-lesson being watched by the others and everyone joining in the feedback on each lesson. This normally implies that all the members of the group (of, say, six trainees) teach their micro-lessons one after the other and that all six feedbacks are also consecutive. Our preference for group microteaching is based on considerations of organisation, timetabling and punctuality, and on its greater effectiveness in changing both trainee and trainer behaviour.

With group microteaching it is possible to fix group size and length of micro-lessons so that the time taken by one group to do one series of micro-lessons (ie one per group member) is equal to (or just short of) one lesson period for the practice pupils. This in turn makes it easier to use real pupils from neighbouring schools according to a fixed timetable, with say, each class attending the microteaching unit for one period per week. Individual scheduling of trainees on the other hand is extremely sensitive to unpunctuality, and in countries where this is a problem there would seem to be strong arguments for grouping trainees.

Group microteaching has positive advantages too. The presence of peers as observers and/or helpers during the teaching of the micro-lessons can be a source of reassurance (particularly if CCTV is used) in countries with a strong collectivist tradition. We believe also that feedback from peers is

often more effective in changing trainees' teaching behaviour than is trainer (supervisor) feedback, and that as much learning takes place in exchanges between peers as in trainer-trainee exchanges. Teaching behaviour which, during presentation and modelling of the skill, is identified as desirable by the group as a whole is likely to prove a more motivating objective than what is merely put forward by the trainer.

A final argument in favour of group feedback concerns the trainer's behaviour. It may well be that the agreed supervisory strategies for skill presentation/modelling and for feedback are unfamiliar to, or at least not generally used by, some trainers. A precaution is for the procedures previously agreed among trainers to be presented to the trainees as part of their own introduction to microteaching. And this is likely to prove most effective in keeping a trainer up to the mark when (s)he works, particularly in feedback, with a group of trainees rather than one individual. This safeguard constitutes a more public form of the *Aide-Memoire for Supervisors* in Brown, 1974.

Individual microteaching has obvious applications in in-service training (outside the scope of this paper); also for remedial work, where people's needs vary and some familiarity with the microteaching process has already been gained. In the latter part of the initial training year microteaching can be made available for remedial purposes on an individual basis.

An alternative to the model for group microteaching described above is to have one member of the group feedback on that lesson before going on to the next trainee. But our experience of that approach has been highly unsatisfactory. Timetabling presents problems if efficient use is to be made of practice pupils and specialised rooms. Above all, singling out one trainee at a time for practice followed by immediate feedback makes for such a stressful experience that the 'protected environment' of microteaching is virtually lost. Our model for group microteaching, however, does not allow of the Immediate Knowledge of Results (IKR) that is a normal feature of efficient skills training. It is only the well-established capacity of a video-recording to 'reinstate' the micro-lesson some time later before feedback that can get around this requirement of IKR (McDonald and Allen, 1967; Berliner, 1969). In our view, CCTV is a prerequisite of group microteaching. Moreover, the possibility of delayed feedback, thanks to the vividness with which a video-recording can re-create a micro-lesson, makes for much greater flexibility in timetabling and hence efficiency in the use of rooms and practice pupils.

Video has other decisive merits in skills training. Even if most people's first experience of it is briefly threatening, this 'cosmetic effect' is quickly

overcome by almost everyone and, thereafter, video feedback helps to 'objectivise' trainee performance, to desensitise the feedback session and to provide excellent training in self-assessment. 'To be able to see yourself teach is worth hours of other types of observation.'[1] It is a potent source of trainee motivation in countries where home video is still more or less unknown. And it encourages both selectivity and precision in feedback. If micro-lessons of more than, say, five minutes are used, it is advisable that the trainer and/or trainee should decide which part or parts of the recording to play back at the feedback session. Key sequences (often of only a few seconds) may be replayed more than once.

Finally, we must stress the training value of the video replay in terms of observing, analysing and understanding teaching events. 'Students' conceptual schemata to a large extent control their teaching behaviour, and changes in behaviour result from changes in schemata. New concepts and ways of perceiving teaching are acquired largely as a result of instruction, but new principles and ways of evaluating teaching are acquired not only from instruction but also from students' perceptions of what actually occurs in their microteaching lessons; and where these two influences conflict, it is the latter which predominates' (MacLeod and McIntyre, 1977). This is a potent argument in favour of video feedback and, we would add, of two-camera video-recording, with one camera fixed permanently on the micro-class and a mobile camera following the teacher or individual pupils. A recording which alternates judiciously between the two cameras makes possible later a surprisingly striking reconstruction of the interaction during the lesson.

Video can also play an extremely important part in the crucial phase of modelling the teaching behaviour that the trainees will later practise themselves. This is one of the best researched areas of microteaching[2] and there is fairly general agreement that a perceptual model (a live, videotaped or filmed demonstration), used in addition to a purely verbal or 'symbolic' presentation of the skill (a lesson transcript and/or description) produces significantly better results, except perhaps with predominantly verbal skills. The effectiveness of a film-mediated model is at least comparable with that of a live one. At the same time the use of video to provide a perceptual model has the advantages of not requiring practice pupils and of allowing a variety of models to be shown, possibly with some form of cueing-signal dubbed on the second soundtrack of the videotape. The systematic use of

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[1] Bloom, J M, *Videotape and the vitalisation of teaching*. In: The Journal of Teacher Education, 20, 1969, quoted by Turney *et al*, 1973.

[2] See the reviews provided by Turney, *op cit*, and Griffiths, 1977.

video models thus has positive advantages as well as reducing the risk that, in some circumstances, the perceptual modelling will simply not get done at all.

We do not minimise the obstacles to the use of video in many parts of the world. The cost of a VTR or VCR, without tax, may be equivalent, at an estimate, to anything from two months' to a year's salary for a third world teacher-trainer, depending on the country. Eight to ten times this outlay is required to equip a two-camera recording studio and two feedback rooms, plus some margin of capacity for spares. (We have used such a set-up to provide semi-intensive two-week microteaching programmes for up to 500 trainees a year.) This total cost might be marginally reduced by simplifying recording arrangements in the studio, but most of it represents an irreducible minimum in VTRs and monitors (Appendix I). To this must be added the cost of adapting a classroom as a studio: neon strip-lighting, carpeting and some form of wall-covering; sealing up windows and installing silent air-conditioning to exclude noise and, where necessary, dust and humidity.

Of this hardware, the CCTV equipment is obviously the most perishable and the hardest to maintain in many parts of the world. It is on the likely working life of this equipment, far more than on relative cost, that the initial investment decision must depend. And in the matter of working life our own experience may have made us unduly sanguine. Most of the CCTV equipment in the microteaching unit in Dakar, which is used more intensively than most similar units in the developed world,[3] was acquired in 1976, and all of it is in working order at the time of writing, nearly five years later, thanks to a supply of spares and the availability of competent repairers. (The equipment has also always been used on a stabilised mains electrical supply.) However, we see no reason why similar performance should not be achieved elsewhere, provided appropriate international or aid-giving agencies would set up regional workshops, each one to serve several countries, for the repair and maintenance of CCTV equipment and on condition that the supply of such equipment as aid included provision for repairs during, say, a five-year period.

One can also realistically look forward to a fairly rapid spread of CCTV technology over the third world in the next few years (cf tape-recorders, transistor radios and ordinary television), so that repair and maintenance problems for video may soon be very little more serious than for these other

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[3]At the Ecole Normale Supérieure, Dakar, three of the four VTRs are for forty hours a week, six months of the year, plus occasionally at other times.

types of electronic technology that have been very largely assimilated in recent years.

In places where the electric power supply is subject to frequent failures there may be grounds for choosing portable CCTV equipment working off rechargeable batteries, at least for the recording studio. (It is easier to reschedule or compress feedbacks.) Possible objections are the greater fragility of portable equipment (designed for lightness), the shorter tapes (thirty minutes) and the need to replace the batteries frequently, as they are in constant use even when the recorder is plugged into the mains supply. In any case, video and unassisted memory should never be the sole sources of feedback. Rating schedules or other types of observation instruments (checklists, coding-sheets, questionnaires) not only keep the observers' attention focused on the important aspects of each micro-lesson but also provide a supplementary source of feedback at all times and a standby in case of power-cuts or breakdowns.

Another possible feedback source is audiotape, and a battery-powered tape – or cassette-recorder – is certainly a possible emergency substitute for video in the event of a power-cut. (Remember that if the normal studio microphones are to be used, they must match the audiotape-recorder, and the sound-mixer must be such as can be powered by a battery when the mains supply fails.) Obviously audiotape is best suited to those skills with the highest verbal content, and in the case of Asking Probing Questions, it has been claimed to give better results than video feedback. 'Apparently the necessity to listen intently without visual concentration provides stimulation sufficient to affect the questioning-skill ability of teachers. It is possible that audiotape recorders are grossly underrated[4]. It is not, however, clear to what extent delayed audio feedback is effective in changing trainee behaviour (even with verbal skills) and therefore whether it can be used instead of video as a support for group microteaching of the type we have described. Our own experience with audio feedback has been limited and inconclusive, though it became apparent that it had nothing like the motivating effect of video on the trainees.

One type of feedback that we have not yet touched on is that from the practice pupils (real ones rather than peers). Whatever the arguments in its favour, it has certainly not proved popular with trainees in our experience nor has it apparently ever led to much useful information not already available from observation of the pupils. Even in the developed world, North

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[4]Ward, P M, *The use of the portable videotape recorder in helping teachers self-evaluate their teaching behavior*. University of California, 1970, quoted by Turney, *op cit*.

America would seem to be something of an exception in the frequent use of pupil feedback. (Of twenty-seven Australian microteaching programmes surveyed by Turney, *op cit*, only two used it.) In most of the third world we suspect that for social and traditional reasons this type of feedback is likely to prove a non-starter. It is also a considerable time-waster if one is trying to get the maximum use out of limited facilities.

We now come to the choice to be made between concentrated and distributed microteaching practice: should trainees follow short intensive programmes or should their microteaching be spaced out over longer periods with fewer hours per week? Research is inconclusive, though there is evidence that when a reteach phase is included it should not follow immediately after the feedback on the teach phase (Turney, *op cit*). An interval of about twenty-four hours is widely recommended, but both shorter and longer intervals have been used with satisfactory results. This is in line with skills acquisition theory (Border and Seaborne, 1966), but provides no grounds for choosing between intensive and spaced-out microteaching.

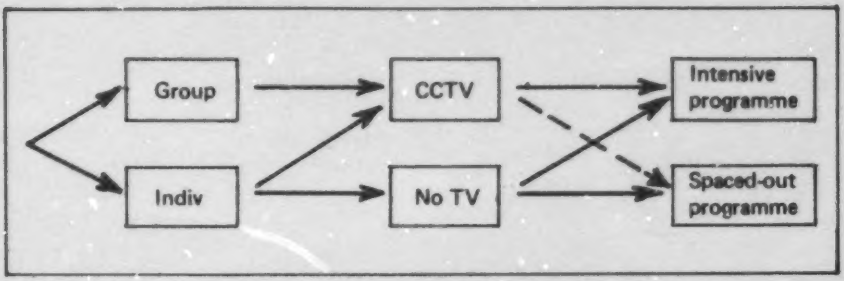
In the developed world microteaching normally takes place at the beginning of training, as a prelude to outside teaching practice or school attachment of the traditional sort. It thus prepares the student teachers for their first encounter with pupils in normal teaching conditions, which is obviously in the best interests of both. But this implies a considerable microteaching capacity, most of which is unused for most of the year. In the third world such underutilisation is unacceptable, and microteaching can therefore only partially serve as a preparation for outside teaching practice.

Spaced-out microteaching can of course run parallel with outside teaching practice (if this is also part-time rather than full-time) and even to some extent be integrated with it, for example in the choice of skills (both initially and remedially). Indeed such an arrangement makes good sense as a sequel to a series of intensive programmes (if that is the main model adopted) after all trainees have had their basic exposure to microteaching. For this basic programme it is the intensive model that we have found most satisfactory in Dakar in terms of both organisation and results. A standard full-time intensive programme can be repeated with successive batches of trainees, all of whose other activities may be suspended during microteaching. If the work is collective rather than individual, trainees on a given programme will be divided into several groups, each timetabled individually, which allows some differentiation of groups according to pupil level, working hours or use of special rooms or equipment. Full-time utilisation of microteaching rooms and equipment is ensured; the microteaching component is slotted into the training calendar of each department or section, with minimum risk of conflict with other activities; and trainees, when they start their full-time

microteaching, quickly get used to the new procedures. This last point is particularly important if video is used: it would appear that fewer training hours are needed to familiarise people with studio procedures and get them over any initial cosmetic effect if training is relatively concentrated. The same is true of attitudes and behaviour in, for instance, group feedback sessions.

We are inclined, indeed, to doubt that group microteaching can be successful with a single teach session and a single feedback per week. A minimum of two weekly teach-and-feedback units would seem to be necessary for spaced-out collective microteaching, which means that a single recording studio and two feed-back rooms, working forty hours a week, could not give spaced-out microteaching practice at one time to more than twenty groups of six trainees each. Experience in Dakar suggests that this is much less satisfactory than a series of short intensive programmes.

The following diagram summarises the principal design decisions discussed so far.



We now turn to the choice of microteaching pupils. The principal types are:

1 Real pupils, unprogrammed (ie behaving naturally).

2 Real pupils, programmed (simulating or role-playing). If simulating, they may be asked to pretend that they are learning something for the first time, or to suppose that some previous lesson has taken place. If role-playing, individuals in the micro-class may be told to behave in particular ways (shy, noisy, over-eager, uncomprehending, etc) and in what conditions they should abandon their roles and do as the teacher would wish (Allen and Ryan, 1969). The trainee teaching will not normally know which pupils are going to behave in what ways. Beguiling as this is, we do not favour programming real pupils who are required to serve regularly in microteaching, as this leads to permanent role-playing and increasingly unnatural behaviour.

3 Same-group peers, simulating (acting the part of pupils of a given level, sometimes with distribution of roles).

4 Other-group peers, simulating. Trainees from another microteaching group can be timetabled to provide a micro-class whose composition does not constantly change – an unsettling feature of same-group peers in group microteaching.

5 Other-group peers, not simulating (really being taught as they are). If trainee groups are fairly homogeneous, this type of peer-teaching is evidently only feasible with subject specialists from other departments.

The 'real' pupils may be, variously, regularly enrolled pupils lent by their schools, schoolchildren on holiday (paid or volunteers) or school dropouts (paid or volunteers). In the third world, dropouts of school age, particularly of secondary school age, are all too easy to find, but funds are unlikely to be available to pay them. Lawless, 1971, describes the recruitment of night-school students (school dropouts taking correspondence courses to prepare for the middle-school certificate in Malawi). In Dakar, in 1976-77, a Fourth Year Secondary dropout class was formed for use in the microteaching studio. In exchange for this service by the pupils, they were given a regular classroom and set work which was later corrected by trainers and trainees. At certain gaps in the microteaching programme, they were also taught as a class. But it should be noted that this working mode was only suitable for school dropouts repeating a class they had already done, with a view to resitting an exam. It is therefore very limiting as to pupil levels; it also tends to be so for a range of subjects.

Since 1977 the microteaching unit at ENS Dakar has used real pupils borrowed from an adjacent practice school according to a weekly timetable, with each participating class spending one hour a week in a classroom next to the microteaching studio and supply pupils in accordance with a roster. In most classes pupils only go into the studio once every three or four weeks, so that most of the time the microteaching hour is simply a supervised study period. When pupils have to be borrowed from schools further away (as at ENS Dakar for minority subjects), it is more convenient to borrow a class (or a half-class, depending on transport facilities) for an entire morning or afternoon. Whichever of the methods outlined above is used, there is little doubt that the regular provision of real pupils is the greatest source of organisational headaches in running a microteaching unit. This certainly explains Ward's finding, in his survey of American institutions using microteaching, that peers were used for micro-classes much more often than real pupils (Ward, 1970). Turney's study of microteaching in Australia found that, of twenty-seven surveyed, seven used only peer-teaching, while several

others used real pupils only seldom (Turney *et al, op cit*). On our initial hypothesis that organisational problems are likely to arise more frequently in the third world than elsewhere, the obstacles to the use of real pupils might be supposed to be even more formidable there than in the developed world, and the reasons for leaning towards peer-teaching correspondingly strong. (Even if schools are keen to help, setting up regular mechanisms can still prove very difficult.)

But at the same time it must be borne in mind that a number of studies have shown significantly better results with real pupils than with peers, particularly for certain skills, and one study even concludes that 'at an elementary level at least, some skills can only be learnt by teaching children'[5]. There is general recognition that trainees prefer and are more highly motivated by the use of real pupils, a conclusion unanimously endorsed in the evaluations of microteaching at ENS Dakar by trainees who have worked with pupils and peers. Turney concludes: 'It would seem advisable for teacher educators to use school pupils in their micro-classes. If this is not possible, they can take some consolation from the fact that for some skills there is little advantage to be gained from the use of pupils rather than peers and, indeed, there may be some benefits to be derived from the use of peers' (Turney, *op cit*).

The possible benefits alluded to are, first, improved (more acceptable?) pupil feedback and, second, the insights gained from playing the pupil's part. There are also obvious organisational advantages to the use of peers: they can be available at times of day when real pupils may not be, they do not require transport or supervision, and their notional level can be arbitrarily fixed. For these reasons we favour the selective use of peers to plug the gaps in the timetable of duty classes of real pupils (see Appendix II). If the standard programme provides for a reteach phase, the microteaching timetables can be drawn up so that peer-teaching is used only for teach sessions, the reteach being with real pupils. Such an arrangement has proved generally acceptable, with trainers and trainees content to see peer-teaching as a rehearsal for the real thing. Motivation has not appreciably suffered from this auxiliary use of peer-teaching, and it is our impression that standards at the reteach are as high as when real pupils have been used at the teach session.

Within the framework of their own group timetable, trainer and trainees are encouraged, in choosing the skills they will work on, to bear in mind which ones lend themselves best to peer-teaching. If the group decides to substitute two different skills with a half-cycle each (teach-feedback only) for a single

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[5]Peck, R F & Tucker, J A, *Research on Teacher Education*, Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, University of Texas, Austin 1971 (mimeo), quoted by Turney, *op cit*.

skill with full cycle (teach-feedback-reteach-feedback), this is best done at a point in the timetable where real pupils are scheduled for both teach and reteach. Similarly, if it is decided to add a second reteach for one skill, at the cost of reducing a subsequent skill from full-cycle to half-cycle treatment, it may be necessary to schedule the second reteach in a peer-teaching slot if real-pupil class-levels do not match, but it is of course preferable for it to take place with real pupils.

Skills most readily practised with peers as pupils are naturally those where teacher behaviour depends least on the imponderables of pupil behaviour, eg Explaining, Planned Repetition, Using Examples, Non-verbal Communication, Using Visual Aids, Stimulus Variation and Closure. We have found peer-teaching to be least satisfactory with the various Questioning Skills and with Set Induction, Reinforcement, Redirection, Correcting Mistakes and Participation. But even with some of these a preliminary distribution of roles among the 'pupils' can go some way towards providing realistic practice.

In this article we have argued the unfashionable position that third world countries should use video-based microteaching in their teacher-training institutions. We have urged the practical merits of group microteaching, with short intensive full-time programmes and real pupils eked out with peers, so as to achieve maximum utilisation of specialised rooms. All this is what might be called the 'formal' microteaching component of teacher-training. However, the institutionalisation of this component, even if it represents less than 10% of the training year, is accompanied by changes in other areas of training which, collectively, deserve the name of informal microteaching. First there is the slow but steady change in trainer attitudes, a growing tendency to practise what we preach in such matters as:

1 the trainer providing the model him/herself;

2 trainer/trainee reciprocity of evaluations, including end-of-year evaluation;

3 limiting trainer talk;

4 trainee participation;

5 guidance and support in the practice situation;

6 positive reinforcement of trainee success.

In the areas of diagnosis and evaluation, too, trainers benefit greatly from their growing familiarity with microteaching: the analysis of teaching skills,

in particular, assists them in their training role and helps them to be more practical and less theoretical in approach (Allen and Ryan, 1969; Ward, 1970). But there is also a transfer, from formal microteaching to other training activities, of the microteaching procedures themselves. It is thus that we have witnessed the growing use at ENS Dakar of trainer-demonstration followed by brief trainee practice and evaluation, both of general skills and of precise segmental techniques, either in peer-teaching (some pupils, some observers) or with specially laid-on pupils. Not only has microteaching awoken teacher-trainers to these approaches and taught them appropriate procedures, but it has also rendered such activities acceptable, and even enjoyable, to the trainees.

We feel sure that this spread of informal microteaching would not have taken place nearly so soon if trainers did not have an annual spell of formal microteaching with their trainees. And it is essentially the use of video that ensures, through trainee pressure, that all departments avail themselves of formal microteaching. Our final claim, then, is that unless you are preaching to the converted, there is no substitute for video.

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Appendix I

Video equipment for a studio and two feedback rooms

Studio	1	voltage stabiliser (serving all 3 rooms)
	2	cameras
	1	video-recorder
	1	vision-mixer
	1	monitor
	3	microphones
	1	sound mixer
	50	tapes
		cables
	1	bulk eraser (desirable, but not essential)
Feedback rooms	2	video-recorders
	2	monitors
		cables
Not included		spare parts
		spare capacity to allow for repairs
		extra video-recorder and monitor for skills modelling outside the microteaching rooms

TEACHER TRAINING AT THE COLCHESTER ENGLISH STUDY CENTRE

Jonathan Seath, Colchester English Study Centre

For the past ten years the Colchester English Study Centre has specialised in the teaching of English for Specific Purposes. One part of our work has involved the provision of in-service teacher training courses, designed to meet the requirements of a variety of different teachers and teaching situations. Sometimes an analysis of teachers' specific needs may reveal over-large classes, inappropriate syllabuses and course books, insufficient resources and materials and other factors that severely limit the potential success of a language teaching programme. In this instance we would tailormake courses to offer practical solutions to real classroom difficulties, as opposed to discussing approaches more suitable to an ideal teaching situation.

One such group of teachers, who have been coming to Colchester under the auspices of the British Council for several years, are teachers of English in Lower Secondary schools from Francophone Africa. The majority have had some previous training and experience and have a level of English around the Lower Cambridge and ARELS certificate level. Unfortunately their access to tape recorders is limited and their textbooks are somewhat old-fashioned, with an over-emphasis on pattern drill at the expense of more communicative practice of interaction activities.

Over the past few years my colleague Susan Sheerin and myself have developed a ten-week course in the teaching of oral English for these students, which forms part of a nine month programme of general language improvement and teaching training. In this article I shall describe the important aspects of the course and the way in which we have dealt with questions of assessment and evaluation.

Instead of focussing on the separate aspects of an EFL teacher's job in terms of the handling of classroom discourse, the selection of appropriate materials and techniques, the use of audio-visual aids etc in isolation, we have adopted an integrated approach with the use of classroom techniques as our core component. For example, when looking at meaningful practice techniques we discuss ways of nominating students, praising them and correcting any errors. At the same time we discuss the role of visuals and blackboard drawing in providing meaningful cues and contexts.

Our overall course outline is modelled on *Teaching Oral English* (Byrne, D: Longman 1976) where the different phases of teaching and learning are divided into the stages of presentation, practice and production, with particular emphasis on the changing role of the teacher and the learner during these different phases. For example, Unit 2 of the course has the following components.

Unit 2 Practice	
Introductory talk	Mechanical and meaningful practice compared
Part One	**Drills**
	Different kinds of drill Basic techniques in drilling Using visuals in drilling
Part Two	**Practice using Texts**
	Using prose passages Using dialogues Micro-dialogues
Part Three	**Guided Practice**
	Controlled narrative building Controlled dialogue building Freer narrative building

The introductory talk aims to answer some of the more theoretical questions related to the connection between different kinds of practice technique and successful learning, with special emphasis on the question of the usefulness of repetition, a technique often misused by the majority of the teachers.

Each part of a unit makes up one week's work with one theme – for example 'Basic Techniques in Drilling' in part one – involving three sessions during one day.

PART ONE: DRILLS

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
45 minutes		← INTRODUCTION →	
	Theme 1: 'Different kinds of drills'	Theme 2: 'Basic techniques in drilling'	Theme 3: 'Using visuals in drilling'
45 minutes (or longer)		← WORKSHOP →	
45 minutes		← FEEDBACK →	

During the introduction to theme one in the first session the Study Centre tutor will use a combination of demonstration, elicitation and discussion to investigate the role of fluency drills and associated techniques, wherever possible drawing on the teachers' own knowledge and experience. The approach used has elsewhere been characterised as 'Socratic'[1] and is based on a series of guided questions that point the teachers in the right direction without prescribing to them or transmitting information in a formal and unimaginative fashion.

During the workshop teachers work on their own in small groups without a tutor. Their tasks may involve the evaluation of different types of drill, the preparation and rehearsal of a five-minute lesson, with particular emphasis on pacing, the giving of clear models, the cueing of responses and their correction where appropriate. In most instances, materials originate from teachers' own textbooks and are adapted where necessary.

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[1] Christine Nuttall, *Activity in teacher training.* In: Teacher Training (editor Susan Holden) MEP.

In the feedback session teachers are rejoined by their tutor for a plenary session where each group reports back on their discussions or one or more micro-lessons are given, with teachers 'instructing' their peers or presenting and evaluating materials designed during the workshop.

If micro-lessons are involved, teachers each take them in turn throughout the course. This avoids the monotony of every teacher tackling each micro-lesson task, but ensures that everybody has at least the same number of opportunities to teach during the ten-week period. I have discussed micro-teaching in more detail elsewhere[2].

We have found that the adoption of this structured approach to the design of an in-service training programme has enabled us to define our objectives more clearly and to provide our teachers with a clear sense of direction as well as giving them an opportunity for considerable practice and participation in a variety of discussion and workshop activities. Our main aim has been to encourage active contributions from all group members, to avoid spoon-feeding the 'correct' language teaching methodology and above all to keep the realities of their own teaching situation in mind.

Although course participants are required to sit various tests that assess their understanding of the course content, we are convinced that there is a need for a practical opportunity to demonstrate the classroom skills that we hope have been developed during the ten weeks. Therefore it was decided to involve teachers in a micro-lesson simulation as part of their final assessment. The role of 'learner' is taken on by the course tutor who is thus able to ensure a degree of standardisation in learner responses which could not be guaranteed by a group of authentic learners. Some test reliability is thus maintained.

The broad aim of this simulation has been to assess the teachers' skills in handling those aspects of classroom technique which we consider to underlie the practice of the successful teacher in one of his schools. The tasks are clearly laid down and include the following steps. As the texts used are fairly brief, it is possible for the average teacher to complete all the required stages in ten to fifteen minutes.

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[2]Jonathan Seath, *Description and evaluation of micro-teaching*. In: *Lexden Papers I: Papers on ESP* available from Colchester English Study Centre, 19 Lexden Road, Colchester.

1 **Warm-up**

a the use of instructions to start the lesson
b the establishment of a rapport between teacher and learner

2 **Presentation**

a the presentation of a structure, fully contextualised and using at least one visual aid. The appropriate use of the blackboard and coloured chalk to illustrate the form of any grammatical patterning
b the presentation of two lexical items
c the appropriate use of checks on learner comprehension

3 **Reading aloud**

a the reading aloud of a text that uses the structure and lexis already presented
b the accurate use of all features of pronunciation with special emphasis on tone group and suitable reading speed

4 **Practice**

a practice with the text, using a variety of question forms and other prompts
b the correction of learner error
c the avoidance of mechanical drilling

5 **Production**

a the introduction of an activity which encourages a more communicative use of language in the lesson

In our experience the majority of teachers are able to spend some time on each step, some of course lasting longer than others.

Although teachers are initially somewhat apprehensive about participating in such an assessment procedure with their teacher as 'student' and with an external examiner present, they realise that it is a much fairer evaluation of their teaching than only answering written questions. For the Study Centre it has provided an excellent and economical way of evaluating the usefulness of the course design and the degree to which objectives have been met.

In conclusion, I can say that our experience of the present course has only been positive and that the various aspects I have described above have in general furthered the Francophone teachers' ability to operate within their own school system against a background of limited resources and large classes.

THE TRAINING OF NON-NATIVE SPEAKER TEACHERS OF ENGLISH: A NEW APPROACH

Jane Willis, University of Birmingham

This article is in three main sections. The first section looks at some of the difficulties that can confront non-native speaker teachers whose English is below Cambridge Proficiency standard. The second outlines the problems often faced by the teacher-trainer. Finally a solution is proposed which calls for the integration of language and methodology work on training courses, and suggests ways in which this can be done.

Introduction

The status of English as a medium for international communication is now widely recognised. Students of English overseas may never leave their own countries but could still need English for business purposes, to talk to visiting foreign experts, to read reports of the latest developments in their own specialist fields or simply to read workshop manuals or instructions. Non-native speaker teachers of English overseas greatly outnumber native speaker teachers of English, but there is little on the market to help them, despite the fact that the problems they face are often considerably more daunting than the problems faced by native speaker teachers, both at home and overseas. It is true that student needs and teaching conditions vary from place to place, but several problems are common to many countries.

Problems facing teachers overseas

One common problem seems to be that of **lack of motivation** among students. Often there is little contact between learner and native speakers or, for that matter, other foreigners with whom English is the common language. The world of business, commerce, tourism and English-medium educational establishments can seem very remote from a school desk. Students rarely get a chance to see and hear English in use; they cannot really be blamed for considering English as just another subject to be learnt for the exam.

Another difficulty seems to lie in the use of the **prescribed textbook or course materials**. Non-native speaker teachers of English are sometimes

forced to lean heavily on the textbook and depend too much on it. Because of the global nature of course books, teachers may face problems trying to relate parts of the book to their students' lives. Sometimes, getting through the course book becomes the predominant aim in both teacher's and students' minds: this inevitably involves the class in a lot of tightly controlled practice and subsequent testing, often emphasising form to the exclusion of meaning and use; any communicative purpose in learning English is forgotten.

The **school leaving examination** often poses problems, too. In many cases, this is a national exam set by the Ministry in the capital city, and while the exam may cater for the children from city schools, teachers in outlying areas often find the exam too urbanised in content for their own students or irrelevant to their needs. Examinations also tend to concentrate on written English as this is easier to test than spoken English; unfortunately the requirements of the exam dictate teaching priorities, and all too often students leave school unable to communicate orally in English, even if they have managed to pass the exam.

Physical conditions vary widely the world over and can make language teaching very difficult. In hot countries open classrooms with low walls are common; cool air circulates carrying with it the noise of pair work, group work and choral work. Fans or air conditioners make tape recordings hard to hear; sand or dust gets into tape recorders and they break down; technicians are few and far between. Over-large classes and lack of resources also daunt teachers who otherwise would be keen to try out new methods.

Finally, a major problem for non-native speaker teachers of English, especially those with no direct experience of English-medium teaching, can be **the language itself**: the difficulty of actually speaking it well in the classroom, getting students to use the English they have learnt productively and to accept the use of English as the medium of instruction in class. There are two reasons why this problem exists and it is worth going into them in a little more detail.

Recent research[1] has shown that classroom language is more complex and specialised than is generally recognised. It is true that it does not carry the

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[1] Several works, including Sinclair, J, and Coulthard, M, 1975, *Towards an analysis of discourse – the English used by teachers and pupils*, OUP; Willis, J R, 1980, *Spoken discourse in the ELT classroom: a system of analysis and a description*, unpublished MA thesis, University of Birmingham; McTear, M, 1975, *Structure and Categories of Foreign language Teaching Sequences*, mimeo, University of Essex.

usual load of apparently 'difficult' technical vocabulary, and perhaps this is the reason why up to now the language of teaching has not been accorded 'specialist' status; in fact, teachers often take great pains not to use 'complicated' turns of phrase. However, the preponderance of idiomatic classroom language, such as the verb with particle: 'Get on with it', 'Give it in', 'Pass them up' and so on, makes up for the lack of 'technical' lexis. A greater problem, however, is caused by the complexities of classroom discourse. The usual pattern of teacher Initiation, student Response, teacher Follow-up[2] is often disturbed because of misunderstandings, need for correction, and clarification. Teacher initiations are often made up of several speech 'acts', each performing a different but necessary function; sudden switches from meaningful use of language to mechanical practice of the target forms can be confusing for the students – even native speaker teachers sometimes have problems here.[3] On the whole, the non-native speaker teacher is expected to be able to handle classroom English without any special training. It is even more difficult for those who have never been exposed to English-medium teaching themselves.

The second reason is a lack of explicit justification for the adoption of the target language, in this case English, as the medium of instruction. We need to look back over the changes in methodology that have occurred in the last two or three decades. The 'grammar-translation' approach has on the whole given way to more oral approaches to language teaching, following on from the 'direct method'. With the growing popularity of oral-based learning came the spread of the idea that using English as the medium of instruction would help the learning process and that students would do better. Since no specific objectives were ever made explicit to teachers to justify the adoption of English as the means of communication in the English classroom, many problems arose; in some cases the use of English sometimes even proved obstructive to the learning process because teachers remained unaware of the objectives.[4] I will illustrate this last point briefly.

For fluent non-native speaker teachers (and also for native speakers) there is the danger of their persisting too rigidly with the rule of speaking nothing but English in the English lesson and perhaps spending a long time explaining a fairly minor point in English that could have been clarified in a

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[2]See the system of analysis proposed in Sinclair, J, and Coulthard, M, above.

[3]McTear, M, 1975, *Potential Sources of Confusion in the Foreign Language Classroom*, mimeo, University of Essex.

[4]A set of possible objectives is outlined in more detail in Willis, J, 1979, *Teaching English In English*, article submitted to the English Speaking Union which won a first prize in their English Language Competition, 1979.

few seconds in the mother tongue, allowing more time for the main points of the lesson. There is also the danger of their speaking unnaturally slowly for most of the time, distorting stress and intonation patterns which I believe to be just as vital to mutual understanding as grammatical accuracy. For those teachers who are less fluent, there is the danger that they may lose confidence when expected to perform in English and perhaps lose the ability to establish a good rapport with their classes. This may lead to the students themselves feeling insecure and defensive and thus less able to learn and retain what is taught.[5] Some teachers, afraid of making mistakes, will keep to a bare minimum the English they use in class; although the whole lesson is conducted in English, the language used may consist entirely of imperative forms and perfunctory comments. This very limited use of English bears little or no relationship to everyday English in the outside world and thus has few advantages over the use of the mother tongue.

The problem facing the non-native speaker teacher in English-medium is not only what classroom language to use, and how, but also why. And as well as the language problem, as we have seen, there may be other problems to contend with: lack of motivation among students, unsuitable textbooks, lack of other resources, unrealistic examinations, and non-ideal teaching conditions.

Problems facing the teacher-trainer

In many countries, the number of schemes for training teachers of English is on the increase. Ministries of Education are aware of the need to improve teachers' performance in the language classroom in order to raise the standard of English of their school leavers and college graduates. Such schemes are set up by the British Council, by publishing companies and by other independent bodies, in co-operation with the government or business or educational establishments in the host country. Some schemes are for pre-experience teacher trainees, others for post-experience teachers or lecturers; some are long term in-service courses, others are short, intensive courses; most are held in the host country but some are held in UK. Wherever they are, courses tend to follow the same basic pattern, consisting of a language component and a methodology component. I want first to consider the language component.

Language work on teacher training courses is usually remedial; language tutors are normally given the brief to eradicate common errors, improve

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[5]Stevick, E Q, 1976, quotes Curran, C, on this subject, in *Memory Meaning and Method*, Newbury House.

pronunciation and so on. Here, however, there are difficulties. Firstly, teaching English to English teachers, who are supposed to 'know' English already, requires a lot of tact. Secondly, there is often a fairly wide range, not only of ability, but also of seniority within each group; the more accurate or more senior participants may well take offence at being asked to practise the Third Conditional, even if they have been getting it wrong. It is psychologically unsound to undermine their self-respect by putting the emphasis on remedial work and asking teachers to carry out similar tasks to the one they ask their students to do in class. Instead of remedial work, some tutors do 'advanced' language work with trainees; 'advanced' work, however, at a level beyond that demanded of their future students, can only be justified if it is necessary for the teacher's future classroom roles, or possibly on general motivational grounds. It is usually insights into the use of more basic language forms that participants can benefit from, but such work often appears beneath them. Although participants often ask to be corrected every time they make a mistake, this is virtually impossible to do without breaking up the flow of the session, and in any case it is well known that mere correction, without further teaching or follow-up, is unlikely to help in the eradication of persistent errors.[6] A possible solution is to use as part of the training course a language course specifically designed for English teachers; this would raise the status of classroom English and as a 'specialist' course it would appear acceptable to all levels of teacher; any necessary remedial work could be integrated into the course less obtrusively. I shall say more about this later.

The methodology work carried out on teacher-training courses is normally designed so that trainees can learn new methods and techniques that they can adapt and put into practice back in their own classrooms. It is only if trainees actually do this effectively that the course can be said to have been successful. There are two problems here: how to plan the course content and choose sound training techniques to make sure that transfer of newly acquired methodology **can** take place, and then how to ensure that it **does** take place. Course organisers often put a great deal of thought into the first problem without taking heed of the second, the follow-up, which requires a different set of machinery to achieve. But without some kind of systematic follow-up, the success (or otherwise) of the course cannot be judged in any way objectively. Comments of the course tutors, 'The micro-teaching went really well' or 'That session on teaching reading was the best yet', and the evaluations of the participants, 'I learnt a lot about presenting new language' or 'I really enjoyed it', made on the last day of the course, are all very pleasing, but so often teachers remain

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[6]Dulay, H, and Burt, M, *Creativity in Language Acquisition*. In: Ritchie, W (ed) *Second Language Acquisition Research*, Academic Press, 1978.

inwardly sceptical despite outward compliance and even enthusiasm. Later on, excuses like 'Well, our classes are too big for pair work' or 'We have to get through the book or they will all fail their exams' filter through; the fact remains that without follow-up it is very difficult to encourage teachers to persevere and impossible to judge the success of the course.

The success, or at least the likelihood of success, of teacher-training courses depends on a variety of factors, many of which can cause problems for the organisers and tutors. There are three main factors that I would like to discuss, namely the organiser's acceptance of local constraints, the methods of training employed, the perceived relevance of 'new' techniques and the theory behind them.

Local constraints vary considerably and are often difficult for a visiting specialist or a UK-based teacher trainer to predict or come to terms with. Unreliable daytime supplies of electricity, shortage of the right type of battery, or a doubtful supply of appropriate taped materials make a session on 'Using the Tape Recorder' impossible or seemingly irrelevant. Lack of duplicating facilities or acute shortages of paper may make the production of supplementary materials for student handouts an unrealistic task for for trainees to perform. Introduction of new techniques that cannot be used with existing resources, or tied into the present syllabus, or prepared easily in the time available, may have long-term validity for the years ahead but are unlikely to be popular with teachers who hope for practical help for immediate use.

Training methods vary; a prescriptive approach may suit a particular group of trainees, but unless by the end of their course they have had first-hand knowledge of the new methodology, in other words a chance to work things out for themselves and put them into practice successfully in conditions near enough to their own teaching conditions, there is unlikely to be any effective transfer of new ideas to their own classrooms. A prescriptive approach of a negative kind can be dangerous, however; it is obviously not very tactful to condemn outright a particular practice that has been in use for some time; it is better to put participants in a position where they can evaluate it objectively for themselves. Perhaps it could be turned to better use: for example, rote-learning in a country where it is widely accepted could be turned to rote-learning of short dialogues illustrating the teaching item rather than vocabulary lists or verb paradigms. Trainees should then be shown how to extend from the set dialogues into less controlled work. Thus an established practice can be evaluated and built on.

Practical work always seems to be more relevant to trainees than theoretical lectures; but participants must be made aware of the theory behind new

approaches or of the reasons for particular techniques, otherwise they may use them without fully understanding their purpose and fail to integrate them effectively into the existing course of study. The language laboratory has given us a classic example of this; teachers who were unaware that lab drills give more practice in the forms of the language than in the use of language would fail to follow up the lab work with less controlled practice in class that would give students a better idea of how and when to use the forms they had just acquired in the lab. Teacher trainees, then, should be shown the purpose and the limitations of new ideas that they or their tutors might suggest.

With pre-experience trainees, there may be less resistance to 'new' methods, since no habits have yet been formed, their own language learning experience is fresher in their minds and it is easier to evaluate other teachers' methods, in this case their own teachers of English, than their own.

However, a systematic follow-up to every teacher training course is advisable, preferably in the form of observations of the trainees' own teaching, in their own schools or colleges. Without such follow-up the success of the training course cannot be judged.

The RSA COTE scheme requires a minimum of six practical observations at intervals during the 300 hour course. This number of observations per trainee is a bare minimum, but at least it does allow the chance for some feed-back as well as valuable co-operation between schools and trainers.[7]

Proposed solution: an alternative design for TEFL training courses

The solution I propose is a training course where methodology work and language work is integrated, where there is a greater stress on the teacher's control and use of language than before, but always in conjunction with the methodology. The trainee teachers should be regarded primarily as English teachers and only incidentally as language learners. All the activities they carry out should be **seen as directly contributing to their role as teacher.**

One reason why newly acquired methods do not transfer easily to the teachers' own classrooms is that teachers are not only inexperienced still in setting up and handling the new teaching activities, but they lack the

[7] For more on the RSA COTE scheme, see the Addendum.

specialist English to do so confidently. If the necessary classroom language is taught in conjunction with the teaching activity, the language itself will reflect and underline the stages in the organisation of the activity, and the activity will provide a meaningful context for the learning and practice of the classroom language. Thus the language reinforces the methodology so that the trainee teacher can perform more confidently. It seems unrealistic to divorce language from methodology and vice versa.

When planning such a course it seems sensible to begin by planning **the methodology component** and then integrating the language work. At least one of the course organisers should have visited representative schools or colleges and observed teachers at work, both in order to understand the constraints prospective trainees work under and to diagnose areas where acceptable practical guidance can be given. For short courses, specific objectives can then be selected; for longer courses, like those leading up to the RSA COTE, a syllabus can be drawn up taking into account a list of priorities. Naturally the content of the methodology component will vary according to factors like teaching conditions, resources available, experience of participants, needs of their students and so on; it cannot be dictated by an outsider. I will merely add one observation at this point. The most difficult part of a teacher-training course to organise and timetable is always the teaching practice: to find (and keep) guinea-pig students of the right level, willing to turn up regularly and at convenient times. Sometimes it is impossible. However, in my experience, on courses where guinea-pig students have been available for teaching practice and demonstration lessons, participants have without exception considered these the most useful and valuable part of the course. This, I think, speaks for itself.

Having planned the content of the methodology component and found suitable teaching materials to use when illustrating specific techniques (ideally materials that teachers already use or can use with their own students after the course), the programme is ready for the integration of the language work. The next step, then, is to specify objectives for **the language component.**

In the EFL classroom where teachers teach mainly in English there are two 'planes'[8] of language in use:

1 the language the teacher uses to socialise with his students, to organise the class and to instruct through the use of language learning activities (this is sometimes achieved in L1). This we can call 'English for teaching purposes' or 'specialist' classroom English.

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[8] A term borrowed from Sinclair, J. In: *Teacher Talk*, Sinclair, J, and Brazil, D, forthcoming, 1981, Oxford University Press.

2 the language that constitutes the actual subject matter of the lesson, which is presented, repeated, practised – in other words, 'taught'. (This can hardly be achieved in L1.) I shall call this 'general' English.

Teachers of English need to be proficient at both if they are to produce students who can actually use English with some degree of competence by the end of their English course. The teacher-training course organiser needs to diagnose the specific language needs of the trainee teachers at each of these two levels. Their needs, in fact, will depend largely on two factors: their own students' language needs and the areas where teachers themselves are weakest linguistically.

I think it would be useful to consider each of these two 'planes' of language use in turn before discussing how they can be integrated with the methodology component.

English for teaching purposes

The EFL teacher can be seen as having three roles:

social or personal
organisational
instructional.

Socialising with the class, teachers and students can use the kind of English that is appropriate outside the class, for example,

'Did you have a good time at the week end? . . . How did the football go?'

or 'What do you think can have happened to Mahmoud? He's late again!'

They can also talk about real events that occur in the classroom, for example if a pupil arrives late; or topical events affecting their lives. Most teachers have enough English to cope well with such situations; it is just that many do not realise how useful this kind of genuine conversation can be for the students, and fail to take advantage of the opportunities the classroom offers for such talk. They need to be trained in the use of such language, so their students will be familiar with some of the social functions of English that will be useful to them later on.

The language of **organisation** can also be of use to students. Again it is generalisable, communicative language and can involve a range of language functions if teachers are shown how to exploit it to the full.

Polite requests, giving reasons, explaining sequences of events, giving instructions, requesting clarification are all functions that students will find useful outside the classroom, and will therefore benefit by being exposed to them and perhaps being taught to use them for organising themselves, for example in group work.

For instructional purposes, the language teacher needs to practise skills both of a productive kind and of a receptive nature.

Productive skills include:

- presenting new language naturally and in a contextualised way
- giving examples on a similar structural pattern or of ways to express similar functions
- eliciting particular forms or expressions of a function or a notion
- giving examples of how new items are used interactively
- acting out dialogues
- asking questions for differing purposes, for example to check understanding or to promote discussion
- correcting errors of various kinds, including appropriacy and use
- introducing a reading or a listening text.[9]

Receptive skills, needed for selection, evaluation and preparation of teaching materials include:

- recognising appropriate register
- isolating difficulties in a reading text
- evaluating textbook exercises
- selecting vocabulary for pre-teaching.[10,11]

Thus this part of the language component, accorded 'specialist' status, is more likely to be seen as acceptable by teachers. Once the specific 'specialist' language objectives have been decided on, the individual needs of the trainees should be specified and ways of improving their general English considered.

[9,10]These lists are not meant to be exhaustive. See 11 below and Addendum.

[11]See Index of Teaching Skills in Willis, J, 1981, *Teaching English through English* – a course in Language and Techniques, Longman.

General language improvement

It is obviously vital that the English taught by teachers of English should be accurate in form and appropriate in use. We have already discussed the problems attached to teaching 'remedial' English; I want now to offer some solutions. Once the course organiser or tutors have diagnosed common errors and general areas in which participants need remedial help, the required language work can be slotted into the methodological component in the following ways:

Grammar can be improved by linguistic analysis and lesson planning sessions focussing on participants' weak points.

Written English can be practised by helping trainees to write model essays of the type their own students are required to produce, or various types of writing exercises for their students.

Pronunciation practice can be achieved by asking trainees to select, rehearse and then record short dialogues for use in class.

Extra oral fluency practice can be gained by ensuring ample time for group discussions on methodological or topical ELT issues and by getting trainees to act out different versions of role-play situations they could use in class.

These are just a few examples of the kind of integration that can be achieved so that the trainee teacher is being accorded the status of language teacher rather than language learner.

Once the course organiser has decided on the specific methodological and language content and worked out how they can be integrated effectively, there is still one more thing to consider before drawing up a course timetable. Thought must be given to the actual training methods to be employed. The major role of the teacher-trainer should be to create an environment in which trainees will question existing practices themselves and can evaluate the various solutions which they or their trainer subsequently offer. Work in small groups is vital for this; teachers must have the chance to discuss and evaluate ideas among themselves without feeling threatened by too large a group.

Obviously, there must be some **'input' sessions** on any teacher-training course, but these need not necessarily be in the form of a lecture. Very often a short tutor introduction sensitising trainees to a problem can promote constructive small group discussions; the advantage of this is

that where the ideas come from participants themselves they will feel far more committed to them than if they had come from the trainer. A demonstration lesson can speak for itself and form an excellent basis for discussion and subsequent group workshops. Background reading assignments with work sheets or tasks like course book evaluation with report sheets can also be productive when done in pairs. By varying the style of the input sessions, the trainer is additionally allowing the trainees to practise a far wider variety of language skills themselves, rather than just listening and note-taking.

There should also be practical group work. This needs to cover and integrate all three roles of the EFL teacher. For example, a peer or micro-teaching slot focussing on the opening phase of a lesson, should cover the social role, greeting and chatting to students, the organisational role, perhaps checking that students have brought the right books, and the instructional role, perhaps revising a language item. It is important that teachers are able to handle these three roles and to mark the transition from one to the other as clearly as possible.

Ideally, training methods should reflect as far as possible the teaching methods that can be used in the teachers' own classrooms; general principles, like introducing sufficient variety, staging, varying patterns of interaction, should certainly be followed in the training sessions. The trainer should definitely be seen to practise what he preaches, wherever possible. Valuable discussion can arise out of this, for example how a particular type of group work can be adapted for use in schools.

On an integrated course such as this, the timetable needs to be as flexible as possible; it is frustrating for participants if they do not have time actually to finish a set of writing materials, or to peer-teach the lesson they have planned or to report back to other groups on the work they have been doing. Just as in a language lesson, students need to reach a free production stage to put into use what they have practised earlier, or they are likely to forget it; teacher trainees also need to feel that they have produced something worthwhile by the end of a session. Trainers need to limit tasks set so that a production stage can be achieved. A timetable allowing slots as large as three hours or half days is far more realistic on this style of course. Shorter sessions can be more difficult to plan and less satisfactory for all concerned.

Integrated courses such as I have described here seem to appeal to non-native speaker teachers not only because the work has immediate and practical application but also because the relaxed, informal atmosphere generated by the training methods I suggest leads to a high degree of satisfaction and enjoyment among participants. Training courses should, among other things, be fun.

Addendum

The Royal Society of Arts Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English

The aim of the RSA COTE scheme is to 'encourage and develop the provision of in-service training in English language teaching for those teachers overseas whose native language is not English' (RSA prospectus, 1981). Designed for teachers whose own language proficiency is approximately FCE or RSA Stage II or above, the course is recommended to be at least 300 hours in length, plus teaching practice, observation and private study. There are two written examination papers, one for language and one for methodology, as well as a practical teaching test, the assessments for which are normally based on the last two of the six assessments made during the course. Local teaching conditions are taken into account and the syllabus proposed by the RSA is a realistic and practical one. Further details of the scheme, including suggested course patterns, can be found in the RSA pamphlet 'Certificates in the Teaching of English as a Second or Foreign Language', price 60p, available from Royal Society of Arts Examinations Board (Publications), Murray Road, Orpington, Kent BR5 3RB.

THE 'E - R - O - T - I' MODEL: A STIMULATING GUIDE FOR TEACHER TRAINING

Tony O'Brien, The British Council, Morocco

Introduction

Do teacher-trainers normally practise what they preach? We have all experienced teacher-training sessions on the subject of learner-centred approaches where the trainees have not had a chance to do anything but listen (probably with gradually diminishing concentration). Or alternatively courses where new ideas were discussed, analysed and debated heatedly, but which the trainees left saying that they could not possibly use the ideas in their own classrooms.

Teachers, have ideas presented to them all the time, both formally and informally. It is what they do with these ideas, and in particular the extent to which they incorporate them into their classes, that is important for the trainer. Surely the only ultimately valid evaluation of a teacher-training course is in terms of how it affects the teachers' performance in their classrooms and the learning that takes place there.

Teacher-training courses come in many shapes and sizes (in-service/pre-service, short/long, visiting 'expert'/local trainer) but there seem to be some elements in any such course which can be considered essential. How the elements are put together and how such emphasis is given to each will depend on the specific purpose of the teacher-training course and local circumstances or constraints, but if all these elements are built into the course, the ideas being put across by the trainer(s) will be better assimilated by the trainees.

Fig 1: The elements of the model

The essential elements

The essential elements then are as shown in Fig 1. For the moment no rank or order is implied. After all the elements have been described, the possible relationships between them will be discussed, certain entry points will be suggested and preferred sequences will be indicated.[1]

1 Experience

Most of you will be familiar with the practice of including in a teacher-training course a session in which the trainees take the part of learners in a class taught by the trainer using the target approach/method/technique/behaviour (sometimes in a a language which is neither the trainees' native language nor the target language of their classes) so that they can better feel what it is to be a learner. It is noticeable that the teachers who are most enthusiastic about new ideas, those who try the ideas out with their students, are often those who have had direct personal experience of the approach or technique rather than secondhand contact through journals or colleagues. For many teachers, no matter how interesting the idea may sound, there are two basic questions to be answered: 'Is it worth it?' and 'Will it work for me (as a teacher)?' If a trainer can demonstrate that the idea works for these people when put into the position of learners, then the battle is more than half won: at least the participants will be convinced that the technique demonstrated is worth trying.

Creating an awareness of what a learner experiences is of fundamental importance to practising teachers, who are vitally concerned with what and how their students learn (more so than with, for example, how the language works). If we want our students to learn, then we must try to understand the learning process and what enables our students, as individuals, to learn. There is evidence to support the view that, for learning to be efficient, the learner must react with his whole body, physically as well as cognitively, and that the whole personality of the individual must be activated and involved.

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[1] The shaping of the ideas in this article, and particularly the formulation of the list in the appendix, owe much to the contributions of the members of a British Council 1980 Dunford House Seminar group: Patrick Early, Gerald Mosback, Simon Boler, John Pidcock, Anthony Lewis and Peter Vickers. The model has since been used under an alternative name: the Cobden model, inspired by the portrait of John Cobden, once-owner of Dunford House, which dominated the Seminar group room.

A personal response and commitment must be elicited from the learner at the emotional or affective levels.[2]

So with teacher-trainees: their whole personalities must be involved, otherwise any interest generated is likely to be ephemeral. Whether they are acquiring a traditionally defined skill such as presenting a structure, or attempting to master a 'new' method such as the Silent Way, they will be able to accept, assimilate and apply the target idea more rapidly and readily if they have been exposed to it successfully as learners.

2 Observation

In addition to being exposed to a new approach or technique as learners, the trainees will need the opportunity to observe it in operation, to be able to take a more detached, critical look at the effect of the idea on teaching and learning without being under pressure themselves. Observation may be anything from listening to a trainer's account, through peer-group teaching and demonstration lessons, to a six week programme of classroom observation. Apart from purely logistical constraints, one problem facing the trainer is that of balancing the value of using the real classroom context (with all its unpredictability) against the need to plan the observation so that the trainees derive maximum benefit and see all the important features exemplified (with the attendant risk of artificiality). It is here, of course, that video comes into its own. A stock of video-cassettes may be built up of a variety of real classes, and the trainer can then select clips to demonstrate salient points, both good and bad, and to answer trainees' queries (anything missed can of course be repeated, unlike in a real classroom). This can be a great help in boosting trainees' confidence to try the technique for themselves.

Whilst the trainer obviously must plan the observation schedule carefully to elicit what he wants, it is vital to allow trainees space in the programme to respond and react to what they have seen. Their insights and conclusions are important not only to themselves but also to the trainer's chances of

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[2]cf Stevick on *Total Physical Response* (1976:37); and 'The crucial factor in second language learning is the quality of personal activation.' (1976:122). Also the thinking of Curran, and Gattegno, who see learning in relation to the total and changing value-structure of the learner; and Curran's emphasis on the importance of 'self-investment'. Finally Curran, Gattegno and Lozanov on the necessity of reducing defences. (NB the above references – plus useful accounts of Curran's Counselling-Learning', Gattegno's *Silent Way* and Lozanov's *Suggestopedia* – are to be found in the eminently readable *Memory, Meaning and Method* by Earl W Stevick, Newbury House 1976)

achieving his aim. By involving the trainees in the process, the trainer can develop in them an awareness of how to observe (themselves as well as others), so that they can continue to learn from observing long after the teacher-training course is over.

3 Trial

Once the target technique or idea has been observed and understood, the trainees must then be given the opportunity to try it out for themselves in a setting where making a mistake will not matter very much, ie where the potential for stress is reduced as much as possible. They need to be able to experiment, to gain confidence in handling the new approach, and to benefit from the constructive advice of trainer and fellow trainees. A teacher should not be expected to do something in class until he feels he is ready for it. This will come more quickly for some than for others, but what is almost certain is that if a particular teacher has not applied the idea during the course, he is extremely unlikely to apply it in his classroom afterwards.

The trial may be conducted with a peer group, with an artificial grouping of learners, or with a real class. This will be determined not only by logistical constraints (eg is it possible to get all the students to the right place at the right time?) but also by the technique being practised (eg language games lend themselves to peer group work, whereas choral drilling requires a full class). Microteaching is often a particularly good way of conducting the Trial phase because real learners may more readily be used, logistical constraints are reduced, attention is easily focussed on detailed points, mistakes can be quickly rectified in the 'reteach' phase, and it combines trial with a great deal of observation and feedback (from peers as well as trainers).

4 Integration

It is all very well if, in the first flush of enthusiasm after an in-service training course, new ideas are tried out by most of the teachers for a few lessons, but if the ideas are to gain long-term acceptance they have to be fitted into the existing set-up, which means the individual teachers' own teaching styles and personalities, as well as the syllabuses and curricula of their institutions. The process of adapting the new idea to personal style begins in the Trial phase, and continues as the teacher uses the new approach in his classes. The process can be accelerated and eased by being dealt with in an open and encouraging way by the trainer, accepting the teachers' reactions and suggestions.

Similarly for integration into the curriculum. Decisions must be taken as to how the ideas can be fitted into the teaching programme: how often, at what

levels, for what length of time, at the expense of which existing component(s), in tandem with what other activities, with which units or exercises of the coursebook, and so on. These decisions, while perhaps the responsibility of the head of department, should be shared with the teachers who will be implementing them before modifying and refining them in the light of their continuing experience.

It is the trainer's responsibility to initiate and lay down guidelines for this process, even if he is not the best equipped to see it through himself. Trainees must be made aware of the factors involved and possible solutions to them. Then, before the course ends, they should do detailed practical work on integrating the ideas into the syllabus, even if the process is best continued by a follow-up project (or series of teachers' meetings, spin-off courses, syllabus development groups, or whatever) to monitor the application of the new ideas, to adapt them to local circumstances, to develop them continuously, and to encourage the keen and to bolster the weak-hearted.

5 Rationale

Any teacher-training course is likely to have its fair share of exposition, where the trainer explains the ideas he wants to put across and the theories behind them, as well as detailed points about their implications and applications. This is part of a process of analysis which may well start with some preliminary background reading (of theory or of experimental reports), develop with the trainer's exposition of the ideas and their rationale, then encompass the trainees' reactions to the ideas and their personal experience of them, evaluate their implementation and finally monitor their development after the course (cf 4 above).

We always want to know something of the theory behind new ideas and approaches, of why they are being propounded, their rationale and justification. But in a teacher-training course the emphasis should soon switch to analysing teachers' and learners' reactions to the new ideas (back to the questions 'Does it work?' and 'How?'). Trainees want to analyse what happens in their classes in relation to what 'should' happen. Their own personal reactions, and those of their students, are more important than an impersonal professional assessment. Their responses and evaluation are more crucial than the trainer's in determining whether they will ultimately implement the ideas. They need informed reaction sessions where they can exchange impressions with each other, as well as formal input from the trainer.

Clearly we are here including the rationale or analysis of all four elements previously described as well as the content or ideas of the course itself, and

this is why Rationale occupies a central, pivotal place in the model. It is at the service of the other elements, and therefore can be dealt with in many different ways: it may be covered in solid chunks, or a bit at a time – to be dipped into as and when the trainees need; it may be trainer-directed or trainee-initiated; it may be prescribed in the form of directed reading or arise out of spontaneous reaction. But however it is dealt with, it will be more effective if it constantly relates to and complements what the trainees are acquiring through the other four elements (rather than being something to be learnt for an exam). If it is used in response to trainees' felt needs in this way then the trainer will be enabling the trainees to acquire the knowledge or skills rather than attempting to hand them down from above.

Combining the Elements

Having looked at the individual elements of the model, let us now consider how they might be linked and sequenced. Here then is the full version of the model.

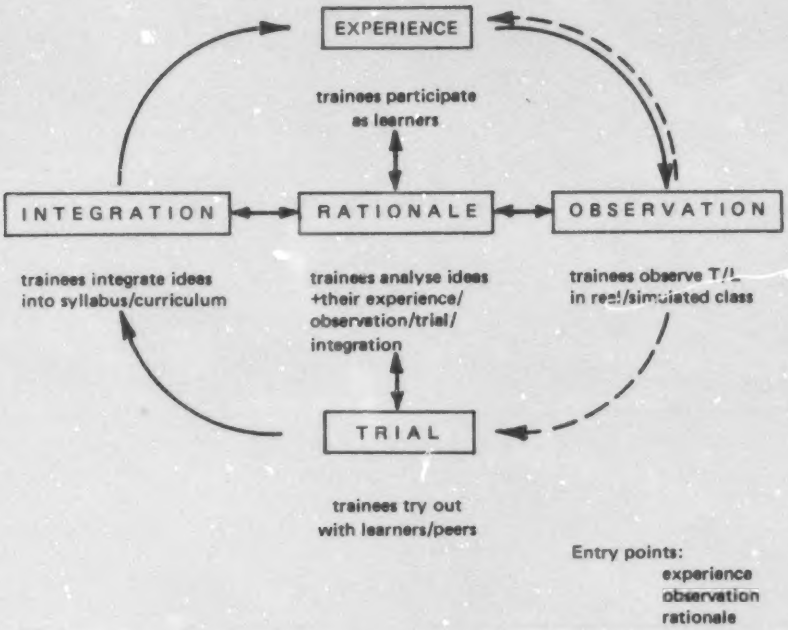

Fig 2: The 'E - R - O - T - I' model: a teacher-training planning guide

From our descriptions of the five elements it is clear that it is possible to start a course with direct experience of a technique or idea, or by observing the technique in operation, or by studying its rationale, but not by trying it out or attempting to integrate it. How the trainer begins his course will depend on a number of factors such as the type of course, the personalities of the trainer and trainees, their cultural, educational and professional backgrounds, and the trainees' level of training and experience. But if the element of Experience is to be included, then it is better to introduce it as early as possible (perhaps with a little prefatory rationale but certainly before observation) since otherwise the personal impact on the trainees will be lost. Hence the broken arrow from Observation to Experience: it is of course a possible option but not a recommended one.

A normal starting sequence might then be: E - R - O where the initial experience is followed by some analysis and then by observation to illustrate the idea and develop the analysis. But note that the two-directional arrows between Rationale and the other elements allow for mixing elements together, so that the starting sequence described may more like this:
E - R - E - R - O - R - O - R where the Rationale is included not in monolithic chunks but in purposeful bits to complement what the trainees are experiencing and seeing, or to provide them with a chance to express and analyse their own reactions.

Once the trainees have grasped the basics of the new idea they will be ready to move on to Trial. But as this of itself requires careful planning and clarification of objectives the move would not normally be directly from Observation (hence the broken arrow) but via Rationale. Once again this phase will be linked constantly with Rationale, and perhaps Observation, (R - T/O - R - T/O - R etc) as the trainees analyse their own and each other's efforts and the trainer consolidates the theoretical underpinning.

When the trainees have completed their experiments successfully they will be ready to apply the new ideas in their own classes: the Integration phase. As always this will be linked with Rationale as the trainees analyse the possible ways of fitting the new ideas into the existing curriculum and justify the decisions they make. Here they will be drawing also from their previous Experience, Observation and Trial. But of course it does not stop there. Integration may be the effective objective of the teacher-training course but the trainees will continue the process: E (now as teachers), R (analysing their own efforts), O (of each other's classes), and T (experimenting with adjustments in their own classes), along with I, as they develop and adapt the ideas to suit their own teaching styles, their own students, and their own curriculum.

Conclusion

We have seen then that for a teacher-training course to be truly effective it is essential to build in experience, rationale, observation, trial and integration.

The degree of emphasis to be accorded to each will vary considerably depending on the objectives of the course, and there will probably be constant shifting to and fro between the elements, but they must all be included. The tendency to limit a course to rationale, observation and trial risks sterility because many trainees will never apply the new ideas in their own classes. Even if a course is too short for much time to be devoted to integration, the trainees must be started off on the right track and equipped to carry on for themselves the never-ending process of adopting, adapting and developing new ideas to improve the learning that takes place in their classrooms.

Appendix 1

A far more detailed and potentially complex question for any course planner concerns the content of the course as opposed to how it will be put across. The possibilities here are almost limitless and it is clearly impossible to be prescriptive. The list below is a tentative offering which may interest some trainers. It is aimed broadly at English language teachers working in language schools/centres who are interested in recent developments in ELT.

The list may be regarded as a check-list of potentially interesting and useful topics from which a trainer may select. They are grouped in such a way that the topics in the higher group subsume those in the lower, which may be considered facilitators or components of the topics in the higher groups.

A THEORETICAL BASIS

1 student-centred learning
  student-initiated
  types of interaction

2 'whole person' concept

3 process of communication
  unpredictability
  selection
  real time

4 Community Language Learning/Silent Way/ Suggestopedia

B APPROACHES

1 Teaching/Learning attitudes

2 Teaching/Learning roles

3 Learning climate

4 Learner-initiated activities

5 Learning units:
  linear
  cyclical
  modular

C STRATEGIES

1 Projects

2 Drama

3 Simulations

4 Role set-ups

5 Problem-solving

6 Task orientation

7 Interaction (classroom language)

8 Testing/Evaluation

D TECHNIQUES

1 Reading/Listening/Writing activites
- information gap
- opinion gap
- jigsaw
- parallel

2 Functional sequences

3 Role play

4 Games

5 Group work

6 Pair work

7 Correction

E EXPLOITATION OF RESOURCES

1 Materials
- print (textbook & other)
- visual (eg picture library)
- audio

2 Resource Centre

3 Language lab

4 OHP

5 Video/film

6 Student accessories
eg rods, Lego

GROUP-WORK – AN ATTEMPT TO CHANGE TEACHER ATTITUDES

David Kirwan and Allen Swales, Ministry of Education, Qatar

In this article we describe a short in-service training programme designed to improve English teachers' understanding of the nature and role of group-work. Dealing with a topic closely related to the central concerns of a new communicative syllabus, our programme raised a number of questions about change in teacher attitudes, the relationship between innovative theory and classroom practice, and the direction that this kind of post-qualification teacher-training should be taking.

The programme involved male teachers in Qatar preparatory schools (pupils aged twelve to fifteen). The majority of this teaching force consists of expatriate Arab teachers accustomed to very traditional teacher-dominated classrooms. Most of them, therefore, have experienced considerable difficulty in adapting to the new teaching techniques demanded by the introduction of the *Crescent*[1] course throughout the school system, a course which emphasises among other things individual-centred learning and the use of real language in the classroom in a thorough-going attempt to apply communicative principles of language teaching to a school situation.

All the teachers had previously attended an initial orientation course introducing them to the basic concepts of a communicative approach and to the *Crescent* materials in particular. The orientation course session on group-work comprised three main parts: 1) a theory session elucidating the reasons for introducing group-work into the classroom, 2) an exercise designed to give teachers themselves an experience of group-work (for example, the construction of a model from reported instructions of taking part in a board game) and 3) looking at specific examples of group-work in the course materials. Throughout the orientation course teachers were also involved in group activities without their attention explicitly being drawn to it in the hope that familiarity gained through active participation would produce favourable attitudes towards group-work in their own classrooms. Although the majority of teachers showed clearly visible signs of having enjoyed the activities and in spite of the trainers' supportive follow-up visits, results were disappointing. Very few teachers regularly conduct group-work during their lessons, an unacceptable situation in view of the integrative role of group-work in the materials.

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[1] *Crescent English Course*. English Language Teaching for the Arab World (OUP), 1977.

A more detailed and practical approach was clearly required in order to link the theoretical exposition to the classroom situation. The forty-five preparatory teachers, who regularly meet in three separate groups once a week for training, followed an eight hour programme over four weeks as set out in the diagram:

<table>
<tr><th>Week 1</th><th>Week 2</th><th>Week 3</th><th>Week 4</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Initial discussion</td><td>Classroom Demonstration</td><td>School Visit</td><td rowspan="2">Forum & Video</td></tr>
<tr><td>School Visit</td><td>Classroom Demonstration</td></tr>
<tr><td>2 hours</td><td>2 hours</td><td>2 hours</td><td>2 hours</td></tr>
</table>

Each group began with a discussion session. For the second and third sessions the group was split into two sections. These sections worked simultaneously either in a preparatory school or on an observation visit to the local English-medium Junior School. In the third session these activities were reversed. The final session consisted of a meeting to discuss experiences.

First Session

The first session attempted to probe existing feelings and attitudes by means of a straightforward series of questions about the purposes of group-work, its practical organisation in the classroom, the kind of language work that would be done in groups, the changing roles of pupils and teacher and, finally, its overall place in the English syllabus. It was soon apparent that learning gains from the orientation course were limited mainly to ideas about the practical organisation of classes. However, many teachers were willing to admit that they had put few of these into practice. In discussion the most frequent comment was the flat statement: 'I've tried it and it doesn't work'. A number of points brought up seemed to be practical questions:

1 It takes too long to move the furniture (set out in rows) when you are in an ordinary classroom.

2 You can't do it with a class of forty.

3 Group-work is noisy and discipline is poor.

Other teachers were suspicious how their pupils would behave in groups:

4 It's OK with good students, but my boys have so little English they can't do anything without the teacher.

5 The boys will inevitably use Arabic when working in groups.

However, a number of thoughtful objections to the methodology of group-work were also raised. These seemed to centre on two points:

6 If the boys are working in groups, they don't hear as many correct utterances.

7 Group-work mostly consists of good pupils giving the weak pupils the answers.

It emerged from the discussion that not many teachers had a clear idea of what successful group-work would look like; many pictured it as a noisy, chaotic and purposeless activity. They were also worried about being asked to depart from their own image of the teacher as the most dominant person in the room holding the pupils' attention at all times. Their feelings were strengthened in many cases by anxieties about criticism from headmasters and teachers of other subjects for not being able to exercise proper control in the classroom.

The session ended with planning for the following week's lesson in the preparatory school, and a short briefing on the English-medium Junior School.

Second and Third Sessions – Classroom Demonstration

The work in the preparatory school consisted of introducing group-work to first-year (aged twelve to thirteen) classes unaccustomed to working in this way. Some of the Qatar preparatory schools have special rooms for English, which eases the practical difficulties, but as many schools are still without these facilities, we felt that it might be more convincing to carry out the project in the ordinary classrooms that many teachers have to face. All of the lessons were given as demonstrations by the trainers, with the exception of one which was given by a teacher who has been using group work at his own school with some success. We felt that the teachers should see the classroom performance of someone who believed in group-work, especially as they had

expressed a strong desire to see such demonstrations. During the lessons each teacher was asked to sit with a group of pupils and help them with their work. Afterwards a brief discussion took place.

This part of the programme was successful in showing that the problems of classroom management could be overcome. In terms of timing, initial setting-up of groups took from ten minutes in relatively overcrowded conditions to one and a half minutes in a larger classroom with boys who immediately recognised group-work from their days at primary school and who were able to arrange the room with little help from the teacher. In the second teaching session these times were halved, an acceptable result in difficult conditions, although one would expect better as group-work became more a matter of routine for the classes.

The regular teachers of the classes used in the programme were able to report an improvement in class morale and pupil participation. All of them continued group-work between the two demonstration sessions, and it was noticeable that far more boys were attempting to join in the lesson by the second week. Pupils, at least, seemed to have grasped the principle that they were expected to direct their contributions initially to the group rather than to the teacher.

The effect on the teachers was more disappointing. It was clear during the lessons that many of them had little idea of how to work with a small group of pupils. Teachers tended either to take over completely and teach as if the group were a mini-class or else to sit in total silence, gazing elsewhere, obviously longing for it all to end. Points raised in the discussion tended to be unrelated to the purpose of the session, or else revealed a staggering lack of general understanding. One teacher, for example, after watching a lesson in which groups were actively working out answers to comprehension questions, wanted to know why the questions had not been addressed to the whole class and one boy told to answer.

On balance, the sessions seemed to demonstrate the practicability of group-work to those who were willing to adopt the approach but who had been deterred, perhaps, by classroom conditions whereas they failed to make any impact on those who doubted its methodological value.

Second and Third Sessions – School Visit

At the same time that the practical classroom sessions were taking place, the parallel sections of teachers were engaged in visiting the English-medium Junior school, a visit intended to give first-hand observation of group-work

in action, and also to provide a wider educational experience of a kind not usually available to Arab teachers. The visit fell into three parts: 1) a tour of the buildings and facilities and a short introduction by the headmaster about the school's background and its role in the European expatriate community. 2) a sixty minute observation period when each teacher was assigned to a different class in order to provide the group with a wide span of experiences. Teachers were issued with a short observation sheet and a questionnaire to help them initiate discussion with the class teachers. They were also encouraged to join the children in their groups and talk to them. The final part 3) followed immediately when the teachers returned to the headmaster's office to pool their experiences and ask questions.

Our feelings, shared by the Junior School staff, were that the teachers' reactions were disappointing. To be fair, it was the first opportunity any of the trainees had had to view a school of this type, and they undoubtedly suffered a mild dose of culture shock. Even allowing for this, however, there was a tendency to treat the visit at a very superficial level. This was expressed in terms of admiration for the buildings and general ethos of the school, while the clearly successful group-work functioning in every classroom was dismissed as solely the result of the school environment and small classes (twenty to twenty-five) – despite the insistence of the headmaster and his teachers that the same style of teaching would be applicable, and indeed even more necessary, with larger classes. A typical comment was that given such surroundings anyone could teach like that.

Fourth Session

In the final session of the programme teachers met the trainers and the headmaster of the Junior School to discuss what they had seen and what they had done themselves. Before the discussion we showed the teachers part of an Inner London Education Authority[2] video film in which a teacher was using group-work in an open-plan primary classroom. The pupils' tasks could loosely be described as mathematical, but we stressed that the film was mainly of interest to them in terms of teacher behaviour. They were able to see the setting of the task, the movement of the teacher from group to group, his ability to involve himself with one group while continuing to exercise control through eye contact and constantly maintained observation. Of particular interest to language teachers was his use of question techniques to draw out his pupils' knowledge and lead them towards clarifying their ideas in a more widely acceptable mathematical terminology.

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[2]ILEA, *Pupil-Teacher Interaction in a Third Year Junior Class*, LMS Television Centre.

Unfortunately, our teachers were, for the most part, unable or unwilling to make the transfer from the particular to the general that we were asking of them. They viewed the film as providing yet more support for their contention that group-work was only feasible in a suitable environment and were seemingly oblivious to the teacher's contribution in terms of patience, understanding and persistence.

Conclusions

Overall, we have to admit that the programme did not succeed in increasing either teachers' understanding or their confidence in using group-work. One factor that such a short programme must necessarily fail to bring out, we have realised, is the long-term nature of group-work; that in less than satisfactory conditions such as those in which we were working, the establishment of group-work requires very careful development over a considerable time. Teachers often tend to expect 'instant recipes' for success to be given to them and find it hard to accept that this is not possible. Furthermore, the design of the programme prevented teachers from seeing the improvement in class morale and pupil participation that undoubtedly took place. Had we had video-recording facilities, it might have been easier to provide a satisfactory overview of the programme. As it was, each section of teachers paid only one visit to a preparatory school. This meant that they did not have the advantage of an earlier or subsequent lesson as a basis for making comparisons, nor were they in a position to make useful cross-comparisons between the three preparatory classes in the programme.

The comparative lack of success of the programme has strengthened the existing doubts about the value of demonstrations by trainers in a language course where the diversity of approach demanded by the highly varied materials means that teachers cannot simply watch a 'virtuoso' performance and attempt to copy it in a succession of more or less similarly organised lessons. The additional step of involving teachers themselves in the planning and teaching of a lesson might have led to more success. As many objections to group-work appear to conceal a distaste for becoming involved in the initially difficult business of reorganising a class, direct involvement of this sort could at least give teachers more confidence in classroom management procedures.

For ourselves as trainers the programme served to make us more aware of the wider potential of such school-based experiences and at the time of writing we are developing a variety of such projects. At the same time it helped to highlight areas where we still need to give help. For example, as we have already mentioned, we noticed that most teachers found the less formal

situation of working with small groups of pupils embarrassing and that they found it difficult to listen to pupils apart from when waiting to hear pre-conceived correct answers. Work in this area might therefore be a suitable micro-teaching activity in the future.

Underlying all the results of the practical work and observation is a feeling that the teachers have still not yet grasped the essential change of emphasis from manipulation of structures ('usage') to real communication ('use')[3] implicit in a communicative approach. If the outlook of traditional language teaching with its emphasis on 'usage' is maintained as a result of this lack of comprehension, then there is of course no compelling reason for teachers to want to use group-work. At a more general level the shift in perspective from regarding learning as teacher-centred to that of considering the needs and involvement of the learner has similarly not been made. Here is a dilemma. As teacher trainers we obviously feel there is a need for practical work. Yet it is clear that in the face of radical curriculum innovation this alone is not enough to promote the inner understanding required. The need for theory then remains. Both teacher training tasks – that of promoting theoretical understanding and that of applying practical help – are essential; they stand in dialectical relationship. The problem of how to merge them in a way that is genuinely helpful to trainees while at the same time edging language teaching in the direction that we would like it to take is one that we are still trying to solve.

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[3]For this distinction between 'usage' and 'use' cf. H G Widdowson, *Teaching Language As Communication*, OUP 1978, pp 1 - 21.

REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL: OR HELPING TEACHERS TO GET PROBLEMS INTO PERSPECTIVE[1]

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A not uncommon pattern for the in-service teacher-training of foreign teachers of English is the short intensive course (up to two weeks in duration) with native-speakers of English as course tutors. Groups of foreign teachers frequently visit the United Kingdom to attend courses offered by ARELS schools, while the British Council and other bodies organise joint courses overseas with foreign education authorities for the benefit of teachers working in the local education system. This article describes an experience which evolved from one such course organised by the 'Wissenschaftliches Institut fur Schulpraxis' in the city of Bremen with the support of the British Council in Hamburg. The authors of this paper were invited to conduct a one-week course in the principles and practice of Communicative English Teaching for the benefit of Bremen Secondary School teachers. The course, which was held in March 1980, was a follow-up to a course held in March 1979 and which had aroused a lot of interest but left many questions unanswered. Very briefly, the 1979 course had set out a programme of syllabus reform in the teaching of English along lines proposed by Widdowson, Candlin, Wilkins, Edelhoff and others, and had given participants a practical introduction to notions of communicative grammar following Leech and Svartvik (1975). The 1980 course was to deal with practical applications of these ideas and principles to English classes in Bremen schools. The word 'Grammatik' has the same connotations of boredom, suffering and intricacies as the English 'grammar', and many German coursebooks have a special supplement ('grammatischer Anhang') dealing with points of grammar prescriptively. Pupils are often expected to learn rules by heart, and there is more than a suspicion that the 'discipline' inherent in this process (derived from the Latin-teaching tradition) appeals to some teachers and parents. Grammar learnt in this way, however, is among the more unpleasant experiences of a pupil's school career, and has little to do with language learning for communicative purposes. We wanted to be able to show that grammar teaching is best integrated into an overall communicative framework. Now, with the groundwork of 1979, as a starting point, and with five days at our disposal, we

[1] This article is reproduced here by kind permission of the editor of *System* (Pergamon Press Ltd). It will appear in *System* early in 1982.

felt that we could only make progress by involving teachers in materials writing (emphasising learning by doing) and so we decided on a workshop format in which small groups of teachers would develop units of communicative teaching material based on sections in approved textbooks and designed to be tried out in class. These would be presented in a peer situation on the final morning of the seminar. Meanwhile, teachers would be exposed to a variety of exercise types (see Edelhoff *et al* 1978) and would be given some guidance on the organisation of group work in the classroom. This article does not deal with the course content in detail; it is sufficient for the purpose of this discussion to note that our task was one of translating innovative ideas into realistic classroom practice which would prove to be acceptable and workable by Bremen teachers.

The five-day course was thus conceived of as an encounter at different levels; between innovating 'outsiders' with ideas tried out in other circumstances and local classroom practitioners working within a context of day-to-day routine constraints;[2] between the theoretically possible and the demonstrably feasible; between exciting new ideas and humdrum realities. We would like to consider what may be implicit in such an encounter.

It certainly carries with it considerable positive and negative potential. Take the positive aspect first. Outside experts carry a payload which is potentially attractive to participants; native-speakers' competence in the language taught (English in this case); implicit knowledge of British culture (important in communicative language teaching which invokes by definition such notions as linguistic appropriateness, the area where culture and language intersect); expert knowledge of the specialist field of applied linguistics or relevant educational theory; broad experience of field applications in the world-wide TEFL profession. The teachers themselves, whose role in this context is that of trainees, possess knowledge and experience of the situation in local schools and bring their intuitive knowledge of real conditions of teaching and learning in the classroom to the encounter. Such courses are usually voluntary, and the very presence of these teachers indicates, superficially at least, an open-minded and receptive attitude; they come thirsty for ideas and hoping to recharge their

[2]For teachers in Bremen, these are not particularly unusual but nonetheless real and confusing: prescribed textbooks with uneven teaching units, displaying much of the current muddle characteristic of attempts to tack a communicative component onto a basically structural course design; large mixed ability classes in the new comprehensive (Gesamtschulen), and no retraining of 'academic' 'Gymnasium' teachers to cope with low ability pupils. In short, many of the predictable consequences of over-hasty change by curriculum planners and politicians, without sufficient attention to the professional infrastructure needed to help these changes to become effective.

batteries. In short, the experts have plenty to offer and the teacher-trainees 'need' what they bring. If only things were as simple as that! Leaving aside for a moment the issue of whether the 'experts' in question actually possess the expertise (or all of the expertise) which they are claiming, or which is being claimed on their behalf, there is the question of whether externally defined 'needs' are actually experienced as 'needs' by participants. When do 'needs' become 'wishes'? Such encounters do not always come off – they can break down in misunderstanding, and even acrimony.

This raises the negative side. Misunderstandings are not necessarily always caused by the obtuseness of trainees who 'do not know what is good for them'. It may well be that the outside 'experts', while they have a relevant body of knowledge or experience to impart, do not sufficiently understand the nature of the conditions which constrain teaching and learning in the local schools. More significantly, the trainees may not believe that the outside expert is sufficiently aware of these factors. Not unreasonably, therefore, they remain sceptical and distrustful at the immediate relevance of the body of knowledge and experience which is on offer to their own situation. In short, there is a credibility gap which may rule out a constructive outcome to the encounter.

A brief intensive teacher-training course can only achieve success if the trainees perceive that the solutions offered by the outside expert go some way towards explaining or resolving the problems they have to deal with daily in their classrooms. Only some of these problems, it may turn out, are specifically professional or educational. They may be existential problems. Perhaps these 'solutions' are, in any case, inadequate by themselves, and may be viewed as technical panaceas. What is needed is a change of attitude – a genuine lifting of the spirits such that trainees feel able to re-approach the problems confronting them in a more positive frame of mind and go away personally and professionally refreshed; prepared not so much to implement any hand-me-down solutions which may have been put forward, but to find their own answers, or perhaps, more modestly, feeling able to cope just a little better. Perhaps, then, we should redefine 'success' in this connection, to include a concern with the affective outcome of the encounter. We do not mean just a vague sense of euphoria ('Aren't we all nice people and haven't we all got on well?') such as frequently characterises the last day of an intensive course and which has no wider significance. Rather, we mean the sense of difficulties negotiated, issues clarified, a working consensus reached – all adding up to a new perspective on the curriculum and the teacher's relationship to it. This is what we mean by attitude change. It goes without saying that such attitude change is an essential precondition to curriculum change, since curricula emerge from the interaction of people, their plans and ideas and expectations, as they work things out in classrooms. In other words, teachers must first be motivated if they are to motivate pupils, and information

transmitted in a teacher-training context can either be dead or neutral, or alive and compelling. It is the teacher-trainer's task to see that it is the latter. He must therefore address himself to the question which is uppermost in trainees' minds: namely, will it work? Will the new ideas presented, the novel materials and procedures demonstrated, enrich the teaching-learning process or not? Or do the awful realities of the local teaching situation rule them out from the start? To meet this challenge the teacher-trainer must find a way of getting to grips with the problems and constraints which oppress all teachers everywhere and this is seldom done by a patronising 'Now teachers, tell us your problems'. Most teachers shrink from such a frontal approach.

At Bremen, on Day 3 of a five-day course, we were not satisfied that we had been getting through to trainees; we were aware of a build-up of reservations, there was a lot of polite and smiling superficial interest but we were increasingly aware of the 'yes, but. . .' attitude thinly disguised by this veneer; many of the materials-writing teams had hit problems and were finding it difficult to summon up the motivation to overcome them; a faint air of depression lay over proceedings, and we ourselves were not sure what was going wrong, or rather what was not going right.

At this point, various courses of action were open to us:

1 We could ignore constraints altogether, concentrating exclusively on our role as Bringers of the Good News. Perhaps we had gone rather too far in that direction already, so we rejected that path.

2 We could abandon the Good News in order to concentrate on constraints. The danger here was that the course would fall into a tail-spin from which it would not be able to recover. Yet we felt that such an approach could be used to tactical advantage as long – and this was the vital condition – as we retained control of proceedings. We had to avoid a negative reaction.

3 Alternatively, we could continue to concentrate our attention on the positive aspects of the message and try to bring out the best in everyone, while sweeping as many objections as possible under the carpet. After all, we were due to leave on the Friday! We were not convinced, however, that the 'Sweetness and Light' approach (see Moskowitz 1979) would see us through. There are limits to the power of positive thinking, and we felt we were near to having reached those limits. Also there was the danger that the awkward objections would continue to surface as long as they were not honestly confronted and analysed.

We therefore resolved to tackle the problem head-on by adopting a modified version of course 2. We decided to invite teachers to take part in a session

devoted exclusively to discussion of constraints. The term 'constraint' suggests an objective condition or conditions which systematically modify behaviour. They are those irreducible external factors which crucially determine the success or failure of our plans. They are factors – like availability of time, adequate classroom conditions, class composition (range of abilities) and class size – which have to be taken into account in planning a successful teaching-learning operation (see Strevens 1971, ch 2, *A Theoretical model of Language Learning-Teaching process*). It is in these domains that the practising teacher tends to locate the problems he personally experiences. One might even say that the course-planner's constraints are the teacher's problems. The difference is that the planner tends to work out his syllabus plans abstractly and objectively within the limitations he is set, while the teacher experiences those limitations personally and subjectively in his working life. We determined, under the guise of a discussion of constraints, to elicit from the group of Bremen teachers a subjective expression of their problems as they perceived them in order to get them into perspective.

The model we adopted was close in spirit to the group counselling approach advocated by Charles Curran in the learning of foreign languages (1972). It acknowledges the pains, the anxieties, the frustrations of teachers, emotions rooted in the objective social conditions in which they lead their professional lives, but experienced by individuals in different forms and degrees, to which, one might almost say, individuals make their own creative contribution. Lest it might be thought that such ills are imaginary, the reader is referred to a recent (June 1980) article in the *Times Educational Supplement* entitled 'High Anxiety' in which the educational psychologist Chris Kyriacou discusses the results of a survey of more than 700 British teachers. In this study Kyriacou reports that one in four of the teachers interviewed found aspects of their jobs extremely stressful. His definition of stress is worth quoting here: 'Stress is the experience of a whole range of and mixture of unpleasant emotions, predominantly tension, with anxiety, depression, frustration and a feeling of being emotionally drained' (TES p 12). The causes of stress reported by Kyriacou fall into four main areas: 'Firstly, pupil misbehaviour, and in particular pupils' being poorly motivated rather than badly behaved as such. Second, poor working conditions, dominated by the stress attributed to poor career structure and inadequate salary. Third, time pressures, which included too much paperwork and too little time to prepare lessons. Fourth, poor school ethos related to conflicts between teachers and their head of school and to problems arising out of a lack of consensus on minimum standards within the school' (TES p 12). Kyriacou mentions two further highly rated causes of stress which do not fall into the above four areas: 'These were the stress attributed to trying to uphold and maintain values and standards, and having to cover lessons for absent colleagues' (TES p 12). It is interesting to compare these findings with the account the Bremen teachers gave of their problems.

The approach we adopted, as we have said, is close in spirit to the kind of group counselling approach which Curran applied in a different context. It acknowledges the existence of stress and anxiety in the client and helps, through the counselling process, to release the client from a state of pain and confusion so that he or she can concentrate on his or her goals: 'In the initial stages of counselling therapy the client tends to speak only about the way he feels but is not able to understand why he feels the way he does. Man, as the why animal, tends to raise basic questions about himself once he becomes consciously cognitive. In this manner the person pursues his affects to their sources. In 'cognising' these sources, he is able to disregard them and so to discharge himself from them. Or he can recognise himself so that he can choose more adequate means to arrive at the goals he has always wanted to achieve. Moreover, he is also free to disengage himself from these goals and choose other goals' (Curran 1972, pp 105-6).

In the context we are discussing, the painful reality experienced by teachers is in danger of acting as a block or check to their professional development. They cannot listen to the expert, let alone engage in a valid dialogue, as long as they are oppressed by the knowledge that 'real life is not like that'. The answer lies in getting the expert to listen to the teachers and in getting the teachers to listen to one another.

It does not require lengthy training on the part of the expert turned counsellor, but it does demand a non-manipulative and respectful approach. It means the expert showing there is a lot he has not understood or, indeed, cannot ever understand, about the teachers' professional lives and the conditions under which they work, but that he understands how relevant such considerations are to the implementation of the ideas, plans, and procedures which he is putting forward as teaching solutions. It should be clear that such solutions will only work if they have been validated by the client or trainee-teacher, and if the client shows willingness to implement them. In short, the teacher-trainer needs the trainee just as much as the trainee needs the teacher-trainer, or as Curran strikingly puts it: 'The teacher is sick to teach'. Developing this point he writes: '. . . the teacher wants and needs students if he is to teach what he knows. The learner, then, engages in a learning relationship with one who knows in a particular area. It is not a dominant-submissive relationship, or a superior-inferior one, but a mutually respectful and convalidating one' (Curran 1972 p 99). Initially, then, all the counsellor has to do is to show that he is ready to listen, and to set up the conditions in which teacher-trainees can listen to one another. To achieve this, systematic use is made of group dynamics. Problems are elicited in small group format, without intervention by the counsellor, and then submitted after peer-group discussion to the wider forum of the whole group. Not until the final stage does the counsellor directly enter the discussion. Until that point is reached he must keep his views and opinions

to himself. His role is confined to that of catalyst and scribe. The following procedure was followed with the Bremen teachers:

1 Participants were invited individually to write down their three greatest professional problems on a piece of paper and to order them in importance from 1 to 3. (The ordering is essential as it is the beginning of an attempt to get problems located in some sort of perspective.) At this stage, the problems noted ranged from the personal to the organisational/administrative; from the localised to the widespread; from the particular to the general; from the apparently trivial to the educationally significant. The important thing is that each teacher should bring himself (or herself) to record a set of problems, to do this in privacy, and to begin to consider these problems in relation to one another. This is the beginning of 'objectification'.

2 Then, participants were invited to get into groups of three or four, and, by discussion, to reduce their problems from the possible nine or twelve to a residual set of three. Teachers who shared the same teaching situations were invited to get together to pool their experience – thus, teachers who for example taught mixed ability classes of 11-12 year olds in the German state school system ('Orientierungsstufe'). The only instruction given was that teachers should attempt to reach a consensus of opinion about the priority ordering of the problems and about the inclusion or exclusion of specific problems. If an individual teacher felt that his or her problems were being shelved despite the importance he or she personally attached to them, then his or her right to dissent was respected, and that person was allowed to opt out of the group consensus. Groups were then in a position to report their findings. This stage took 'objectification' a step further by compelling individual teachers to subject their problems to scrutiny, and to begin to get them into perspective. It is worth stressing that the object here was not so much to **bring out** the problems which we already knew to exist as to ensure that these problems were perceived as shared by teachers in a mutually supportive atmosphere. By the end of this phase it was hoped that **problems** experienced individually in professional isolation were beginning to be perceived as objective **constraints** implicit in the school situation. It would then be possible to consider whether solutions existed which might go some way to answering the particular problems involved.

3 At this final stage, teachers gathered in a plenary meeting forming a circle presided over by ourselves, teacher-trainers turned counsellors. Each of the groups reported its findings through a group spokesman while the counsellor, acting as chairman, wrote up the points raised on the blackboard without interpretation or comment. The points were then grouped into first, second and third choices, as follows:

First choices:

a Wide ability range in classes (three mentions)

b Teacher effort out of proportion to student response (two mentions)

c Lack of time to 'cover' the syllabus

d Material condition [illegible] classrooms

e Class size (classes of thirty-plus pupils)

f Inadequate textbooks and materials

Second choices:

a Class size (two mentions)

b Teacher effort excessive in the light of pupil learning

c Lack of preparation time

d Bad psychological relationship between teachers and pupils

e English lessons badly located in the timetable, viz at the end of the day

f Student activity too dispersed and discontinuous

Third choices:

a Parental pressure exercised on teachers to get pupils to achieve

b Lack of co-operation between students in classrooms – aggressive and competitive behaviour, abuse of tolerant and permissive attitudes exhibited by teachers (this problem was described as 'typically German')

c Negative backwash effect of testing and exams on teaching syllabuses and methods

d Lack of co-operation among teachers themselves leading to time-wasting and duplication of effort

e Pupils' desire for explicit rules or ready formulae which would facilitate language learning

f A tendency towards more teacher-talk as the task of explanation grows more complex

It is possible to see in some of these factors a reflection of the causes of teacher stress mentioned by Kyriacou. It is salutary to note, in the context of an intensive course which dealt with foreign language teaching methods, the high proportion of general educational issues which were raised. For example, one of the cited causes of stress is the belief that, as the Bremen teachers put it: 'Teacher effort is excessive in the light of pupil learning'; this confirms Kyriacou's finding that pupil misbehaviour was less a matter of being badly behaved as such, and more a question of being poorly motivated. This at first sight looks like a harmless enough expression of a 'martyr complex' which could be put down as endemic to the 'giving' professions of teacher, and, say, housewife. On reflection, however, it seems sadder and more pernicious in its effect on teachers and learners alike because such a belief reflects a serious misconception of the nature of the teaching process and the limitations of the teaching role. It should be obvious that, more than most subjects, a foreign language cannot be taught; it can only be learnt. Teachers should be clear in their own minds about the pupil behaviours which they are already to accept as evidence of foreign-language learning. This must include the ability to communicate in the foreign language and not merely to parrot responses, to gap-fill, to recite irregular verbs or to engage in other language-like behaviour. Such communication must be by definition unpredictable and student-initiated. Perhaps foreign language teachers would do better to adopt a methodology which took more explicit account of this fact? Perhaps teachers are going about things the wrong way? These were the very issues – implicit in communicative approaches to language teaching – which we had come to Bremen to discuss. A consideration of the general educational issues raised might enable us to come to grips with the specific principles and procedures we were advocating.

Our next step, then, was to suggest that we should proceed to a collective examination of the points mentioned, disregarding the priority system on grounds that most of the relatively less important matters had already been weeded out. We decided to set up two broad 'baskets' into which problems could be sorted:

Basket 1 Objective factors or constraints

To this basket we assigned all the problems which appeared to us to be objectively rooted in school conditions, and over which it seemed that classroom teachers had little control.[3] This yielded the following selection:

1 Class-size

2 Mixed ability range

3 Lack of preparation time

4 Inappropriate textbooks

5 Overloaded syllabuses, and lack of time to cover them

6 Poor teaching conditions of a material kind

7 Timetabling problems

8 Backwash effect of tests and exams

9 Discontinuity of student activity (a reflection of timetabling?)

Basket 2 Subjective factors

To this basket we assigned all the problems which appeared to have less tangible, psychological causes.

1 Pupil motivation and teacher effort (as discussed)

2 Bad psychological relationship between teachers and pupils

3 Lack of co-operation between pupils (the 'German' problem)

4 Lack of co-operation between language teachers themselves

5 Parental pressure on teachers to get pupils to achieve

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[3]One outcome of the seminar, though, was the closing of ranks by the teachers, who drew sufficient strength from the mutually supportive atmosphere to feel able to tackle the Bremen Education Authorities over some of the points in this category, points which few or none of them would have felt confident enough to raise as individuals.

An interesting general discussion ensued as to how to classify two problems which appeared to be learner-related – namely, students' desire for explicit rules or ready formulae, and a tendency noted by one teacher to engage in increasingly complex explanations of grammar in German. This discussion was extended to include such issues as whether teachers objectively lacked time to cover their syllabuses or whether they simply felt that this was the case. We were poised between the occupational realities of the classroom and the subjective reactions of teachers under stress. For example, was the teacher who was concerned with the problem of excessive explanation and teacher-talk reflecting her anxiety at the fact that pupils did not appear to be learning what she was teaching? How could she be helped to take a more relaxed approach? Was foreign language learning perhaps a different and more complex kind of process then the rather simple one she envisaged? By the end of the 'constraints' session, a clear and daunting picture of the reality of Bremen teachers' situations had emerged and, it seemed, few solutions were in sight. The session closed in an atmosphere of gloom and there seemed to be few enough 'Reasons to be cheerful' (to quote Ian Dury, an English pop singer who names a few). So deep was the gloom that the joint authors of this article retreated to their room and discussed the Pandora's Box effect over a large whisky. Had we defeated our own purposes?

Kyriacou suggests five maxims to help the battered teacher:

1 Get things in perspective

2 Analyse yourself and your situation

3 Recognise your limitations

4 Pamper yourself

5 Relax

At the end of Day 3, this advice seemed to apply with particular pertinence to two teacher trainers. Had we achieved catharsis? Or was the course in the grip of a destructive and negative downward spiral from which it could not recover?

We had resisted the temptation to respond to teachers' problems with glib answers, and we had shown ourselves to be sincere in our desire to make relevant proposals to meet real problems. However, it seemed an open question whether the sheer volume and seriousness of the problems facing the Bremen teachers would not overwhelm the constructive solutions we had to offer.

Meanwhile we dejectedly tried to put into effect Kyriacou's five maxims, with special reference to 4 and 5.

The next morning the gloom appeared to have lifted. It had not occurred to us that, in the process of eliciting problems from the teachers, we ourselves would find ourselves sympathetically bearing the brunt of them. In other words, our depression the previous evening was the price of empathy. In an almost tangible sense, we had invited the teachers to shift their burden on to us (and on to one another). We ourselves could not expect to remain emotionally immune. Yet we were better placed to get a hearing for our ideas now that we had shown ourselves to be aware of, and sensitive to, the work context in which teachers had to put these ideas into effect.

Some of these ideas even seemed to offer methodological answers to specific points which had been raised. For example, we were able to point out that planned group work was designed to cope with large mixed-ability classes, and might help to improve the poor relations between teachers and pupils and lack of co-operation between pupils which had been noted as particular problems. Such an approach had important implications for the handling of time in the classroom, tending to produce more interactive activity and less teacher-talk. If teachers could get used to group work, we suggested it might help considerably to diminish teacher stress and the sense which some teachers have that they are responsible for all learning that takes place in the classroom. As far as overloaded syllabuses were concerned, it was not necessary for teachers to feel that they had to 'cover' all the steps in a language syllabus with equal thoroughness, since this kind of coverage was no guarantee of successful language learning. Apart from the educational crudity of a lockstep approach to learning, there was the fact that in real language learning input never equals output. Instead, teachers could consider the implications of David Wilkins's (1976) suggestion of the existence of two fundamentally different types of syllabus: the analytic, consisting of chunks of ungraded material, and the synthetic, consisting of individual language items strung together in a sequence. Perhaps graded and ungraded activities could be combined in an approach which allowed scope for individual learning strategies and abilities? Perhaps teachers were suffering from a misconception about the nature of language learning – a grammar-teaching neurosis which was bound to be unproductive and which simply increased teachers' sense of frustration? Instead, they might consider ways in which language learning could be made a more enjoyable experience – particularly in the treatment of long and tedious texts. An overconscientious punitive approach might satisfy the teacher that he or she was doing his professional best but would prove to be very effective in inducing pupils to learn happily and willingly. Inadequate textbooks could be supplemented with attractive authentic materials. Dull texts could be enlivened with alternative activities of an information-processing kind. Above all,

students' attention could be shifted away from formal aspects of language towards the patterns of meaning which language creates and which students themselves can create. A concern with the transmission and interpretation of meanings was central to a communicative approach. All of these things were possible – up to a point. The degree to which such changes might be implemented would depend inevitably on local classroom conditions. They would depend even more on teachers' willingness to experiment, and their ability to implement change effectively. It was important to recognise, however, that some of the more radical proposals which we had put forward, such as, for example, greater emphasis on differentiated tasks upon which students would work in small groups, would demand more of the teacher initially and it was here that the teacher's knowledge and experience of classroom conditions could prove decisive in determining the success or failure of the outcome. As Morrison and McIntyre remind us, in a slightly different context:

> 'Changing the emphasis of motivation in the classroom is difficult and it will hardly work if the teacher is just going through the motions, for it not only requires management abilities of a high order, but also a radical change in the relationships he has with pupils' (Morrison and McIntyre 1969, p 132).

Thus, certain solutions we had put forward could only prove their effectiveness if teachers were able and willing to make them work. At the conclusion of our five-day encounter with the group of Bremen teachers, the most we could claim was that we had outlined a set of principles for a communicative approach to language teaching and made certain practical suggestions as to how these principles might be applied in the real-life conditions of Bremen classrooms. But in the end it was for the Bremen teachers to judge whether they could, or should, implement them. Yet the fact remained that materials production teams did find new energy and some extremely exciting ideas, now documents in the course papers, were put forward in the feedback session on the final morning. A letter was drafted to publishers to ask for more effective communicative teaching material and a second letter was sent to the Bremen Education Authority to ask for a follow-up course in 1981 on 'The Testing of Communicative Language'. The dispirited head-shaking had ceased and there was an encouragingly positive forward-looking mood about the place.

It would be pleasing to report that, at the course's conclusion, we separated from participants with 'the sense of difficulties negotiated, issues clarified, a working consensus reached, all adding up to a new perspective on the curriculum and the teachers' relationship to it.' With hindsight, such an aim was almost certainly too ambitious for such a brief encounter; and yet a valuable dialogue had taken place, and could be taken up again and developed further. There is no doubt that the security engendered by our own

reappearance to run this second course and the relaxed atmosphere promoted by the cosy residential setting also contributed to the eventual outcome. But we felt that the 'Constraints' session had been a significant turning point, one which, for whatever reason, we had felt confident enough to provoke and the consequences of which the teachers had felt secure enough to confront.

Kyriacou says that the most effective cure for teacher anxiety and depression is to find its cause and take some positive action to remove it. This was what we had attempted. If such action does not work, then the alternative is to discuss its cause, or causes, with one's friends and colleagues, and this was the purpose which our 'Constraints' session had served. When our encounter had reached its close, we felt pretty sure that we had achieved the more modest aim of sending teachers away feeling able to cope just a little better, or, as Ian Dury puts it, with 'Some reasons to be cheerful'.

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